



AN
ATTEMPT
TOWARDS
AN IMPROVED TRANSLATION
OF THE
PROVERBS OF SOLOMON,
FROM
The Original Hebrew,
WITH
NOTES,
CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY,
AND A
Preliminary Dissertation.

BY THE REV. GEORGE HOLDEN, M.A.

TANTA DIVINÆ SAPIENTIÆ VIS EST, UT IN HOMINIS PECTUS
INFUSA, MATREM DELICTORUM, STULTITIAM UNO SEMEL IMPETU
EXPELLAT.—Lactantius, lib. iii. § 26.

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PRELIMINARY

DISSERTATION.

Preliminary Dissertation.

SECTION I.

THE reign of Solomon was the most splendid and the happiest period in the Jewish annals. It was the halcyon day of Israel. A long respite from the scourge of war produced the tranquillity so necessary to the cultivation and improvement of the peaceful arts; an extensive commerce promoted the wealth and affluence of the nation; while a philosophic Monarch sat upon the throne, whose mild and equitable government secured the happiness of his subjects. The magnitude of the empire, which extended from the Euphrates to the Nile; the stately edifices erected by royal taste and munificence; the attendance of a numerous retinue; and the choicest articles of foreign luxury, imported by the navy which sailed to Tharshish and Ophir, together with every article of elegance and refinement which an

immense revenue could purchase: all combined to surround the court of Solomon with a pomp and splendour which, till then, had not been witnessed in the East.

Nor, amidst the dazzling objects of Oriental magnificence, were the interests of religion neglected. A Temple, of unrivalled grandeur, arose under the superintending care of the Monarch, by whom it was dedicated to the Lord God of Hosts, with the solemnities of prayer and sacrifice; and he composed, for the benefit of his subjects, several treatises, admirably calculated to promote the love and practice of religion. This unremitting attention to the welfare of the people and the glory of Jehovah, shed the brightest lustre upon the regal diadem; and his wisdom became the theme of admiration and panegyric in all the surrounding states. The copious description of his riches and power in the first book of Kings, and second of Chronicles, presents a less exalted picture of the Jewish Monarch, than this single circumstance, that "there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom."*

* 1 Kings, iv. 34; 2 Chron. ix. 23.

The wisdom of the royal Sage was often promulgated to the world in short aphorisms and sententious maxims, expressed in poetical numbers, as being more easily remembered, and more useful to the great mass of the people, than abstruse arguments, and methodical discourses. Short and pithy sentences have been employed, from the most remote antiquity, as the vehicle of ethical instruction, and particularly adapted to the simplicity of the early ages. When writings were but few, and the reasonings of systematic philosophy almost unknown, just observations on life and manners, and useful moral precepts, delivered in concise language, and often in verse, would form a body of the most valuable practical wisdom, which, by its influence upon the conduct, must have contributed largely to the peace and wellbeing of society. An acute remark, a moral adage, an admonition conveyed in a brief and compact sentence, would arrest the attention, and operate upon the hearts of a rude people with a force, of which there is no example in periods of greater cultivation. Yet, in every age, they are well fitted to impress the minds of the young and uninformed; and, as they are the most valuable guides in the affairs of life, when we are called upon, not to deliberate, but to act; not to unfold a circuitous argument,

but to transact business; all must find it highly advantageous to retain in their memories the maxims of proverbial wisdom. Aphorisms excite attention by elegance of diction, or the beauty of rhetorical figures; they command respect by their oracular brevity; and the smart and poignant truths contained in them penetrate deeply into the mind, and infix themselves in the memory. What more can be required to recommend this kind of composition to our notice, than its adoption by the Holy Spirit, as the means of disseminating inspired knowledge?

This method of instruction appears to be peculiarly suited to the disposition and genius of the Asiatics, among whom it has prevailed from the earliest ages. The Gymnosophists of India delivered their philosophy in brief ænigmatical sentences;* a practice adopted and carried to a great extent by the ancient Egyptians.† The mode of conveying instruction by compendious maxims obtained among the Hebrews, from the first dawn of their literature, to its final extinction in the East through the power of the Mohammedan arms; and it was familiar to the inhabitants

* Diog. Laert. *Proœm.* p. 4, *Genev.* 1615.

† Jablonski, *Pantheon Ægypt.* *Prolegom.* c. 3. Brucker, *l. i. c.* 8.

of Syria and Palestine, as we learn from the testimony of St. Jerom.* The eloquence of Arabia was mostly exhibited in detached and unconnected sentences, which, like so many loose gems, attracted attention by the fulness of the periods, the elegance of the phraseology, and the acuteness of proverbial sayings.† Nor do the Asiatics, at present, differ, in this respect, from their ancestors, as numerous *Amthâl*, or moral sentences, are in circulation throughout the regions of the East, some of which have been published by Hottinger, Erpenius, the younger Schultens, and others who have distinguished themselves by the pursuit of Oriental learning.‡ “The moralists of the

* “Familiare est Syris, et maxime Palæstinis, ad omnem sermonem suum parabolas jungere.”—Hieronimi Comment. in Matt. xviii. 23.

† “Orationes autem eorum minime in partes suas juxta rhetoricæ apud Græcos et Latinos præcepta distributæ, nec methodice concinnatæ; adeo ut sententiarum in us frequentium gemmæ vere dispersæ, minimeque inter se colligatæ videantur, totusque sermo arena sine calce recte dici posse videatur. In sententiarum tamen rotunditate, phrasium elegantia, ac proverbiorum acumine, invenies quod animum feriat.”—Pococke, *Specimen Historiæ Arabum*, p. 167, ed. White, Oxon. 1806. See Sale’s *Preliminary Discourse to the Koran*, sect. 1, p. 35, Lond. 1812.

‡ Hottingeri *Hist. Orient*, lib. ii. cap. 5. Erpenii *Prov. Arab. Cent. duæ*, Leidæ, 1614. Schultens, *Antholog. Senten. Arab.* Lug. Bat. 1772. “Veteres Arabum sententiæ sunt innumeræ; et permulta sunt volumina, quæ *Amthâl* sive Sententias, complectuntur.”—Sir Wm. Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticæ Commentarii*, p. 275, ed. Eichhorn, Lips. 1777. See D’Herbelot, *Bibliothèque Orientale*, in *Amthâl*, and *Les Maximes des Orientaux*, at the end of vol. iv.

East," says Sir Wm. Jones, "have, in general, chosen to deliver their precepts in short sententious maxims, to illustrate them by sprightly comparisons, or to inculcate them in the very ancient forms of agreeable apologues: there are, indeed, both in Arabic and Persian, philosophical tracts on ethics, written with sound ratiocination and elegant perspicuity: but in every part of the Eastern world, from Peking to Damascus, the popular teachers of moral wisdom have immemorially been poets, and there would be no end of enumerating their works, which are still extant in the five principal languages of Asia."*

The ingenious, but ever-disputing and loquacious Greeks were indebted to the same means for their earliest instruction in wisdom. The sayings of the seven Wise Men; the Golden Verses of Pythagoras; the remains of Theognis and Phocylides, if genuine; and the Gnomai of the older poets, testify the prevalence of aphorisms in ancient Greece. Had no specimens remained of Hellenic proverbs, we might have concluded this to have been the case; for the Greeks borrowed the rudiments, if not the principal part of their knowledge from those whom they

* Disc. on the Philos. of the Asiatics, Works, vol. i. p. 167, 4to. Lond. 1799.

arrogantly termed barbarians;* and it is only through the medium of compendious maxims and brief sentences that traditionary knowledge can be preserved.† This mode of communicating moral and practical wisdom accorded with the sedate and deliberative character of the Romans;‡ and, in truth, from its influence over the mind, and its fitness for popular instruction, proverbial expressions exist in all ages and in all languages.§

* Brucker, Hist. Philos. lib. ii. cap. 1. Burnet, Archæologia, lib. i. cap. 9. Shuckford's Connections, Pref. to vol. i.

† The greatest part of Greek aphorisms have, no doubt, perished; having fallen into neglect when the dialectic art and a systematic philosophy gained ground among this acute and disputatious people. Eusebius, in his Treatise against Marcellus, lib. i. cap. 3, makes mention of Greek proverbs, and collectors of them. Among the *Deperdita* are the *Κυριαὶ Δοξαὶ* of Epicurus.—Diog. Laert. lib. x. p. 724. Cicero, de Finibus, lib. ii. § 7; de Nat. Deor. lib. i. § 30.

‡ Seneca, Ep. 59. Both Suetonius (Vita Cæsaris, § 56) and Cicero (ad Divers. l. 9, Ep. 16) speak of the *Dicta Collectanea* of Cæsar; namely, Apophthegms collected by him; and some aphoristic sayings of the ancients are reported by Valerius Maximus, lib. vii. cap. 2.

§ Ray's Collection of English Proverbs is well known; and there is a book entitled, *Adagia sive Proverbiorum omnium quæ apud Græcos, Latinos, Hebræos, Arabes, &c. in usu fuerunt Collectio*, fol. Erf. 1646. Sir Wm. Jones mentions the precepts of Odin, written in the Runic tongue, and the work of a Persian poet, Sheikh Attâr, as instances of aphoristic composition.—(Comment. de Poes. Asiat. p. 274, ed. Eichhorn, Lips. 1777.) Grotius, in his Prolegom. to the Proverbs, speaks of the *Εκλογαὶ* of the Byzantine emperors.

Proverbs, in the Hebrew language, are called Meshalim, which is derived from a verb signifying both *to rule, to have dominion, and to compare, to liken, to assimilate*: hence the term denotes the highly figurative and poetic style in general, and likewise those compendious and authoritative sentences in particular, which are commonly denominated Proverbs. This term, which our Translators have adopted after the Vulgate, denotes, according to our great Lexicographer, “a short sentence frequently repeated by the people, a saw, an adage;” and no other word can, perhaps, be substituted more accurately expressing the force of the Hebrew; or if there could, it has been so long familiarized by constant use, that a change is totally inadmissible.*

* The LXX employ the term *παροιμία*, whose etymology, from *παρά* and *οἶμος*, *ria*, clearly ascertains its meaning to be that of a saying of general notoriety, such as is commonly heard in the ways and streets; but in 1 Kings, iv. 32, they render the Hebrew word by *παράβολαι*, and in Prov. xxv. 1, by *παίειναι*. The Arabic *مثل*, and the Syriac *ܡܫܠܐ*, of similar import, manifestly spring from the same root as the Hebrew *משל*, by a common permutation of Shin and Tau. For a further explanation of *משל*, besides the Lexicons, see Bishop Lowth's *Prælect.* 4, with the note of Michælis. Michælis, *Supplem. ad Lex. Heb.* No. 1483. Doederlein, *Observat.* prefixed to his *Scholia* in Prov. Carpzovii *Introductio* in Lib. Canon. par. 2, cap. iv. § 1. Peters's *Crit. Diss.* on the Book of Job, p. 45, Lond. 1751.

The Meshalim, or Proverbs of Solomon, on account of their intrinsic merit, as well as of the rank and renown of their author, would be received with submissive deference; in consequence of which, they would rapidly spread through every part of the Jewish territories. The pious instructions of the King would be listened to with the attention and respect they deserve; and, no doubt, would be carefully recorded by a people attached to his person, and holding his wisdom in the highest admiration. These, either preserved in writing, or handed down by oral communication, were subsequently collected into one volume, and constitute the book in the sacred canon entitled “The Proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel.” The genuineness and authenticity of this title, and those in chap. x. 1, and xxv. 1, cannot be disputed; not the smallest reason appears for calling them in question; and it cannot for a moment be believed, that the fact is *not* as they state it; that a direct falsehood is placed at the head and front of the book; and that, though the Proverbs are expressly asserted to be Solomon’s, they were not actually composed by him. Such a supposition would go far to overturn the authority of the sacred canon; it would diminish our confidence in the Scriptures as an authentic record of

revealed truth, which must end in that scepticism which tends, in its rapid progress, to overwhelm every thing sacred and dear to man. The Proverbs, then, are to be regarded as the real production of the Jewish Monarch.

One portion of the book, from the twenty-fifth chapter to the end of the twenty-ninth, was compiled by the men of Hezekiah, as appears from the title prefixed to it.* Eliakim, Shebna, Joah, Isaiah, Hosea, and Micha, personages of eminence and worth, were contemporary with Hezekiah; but whether these or others executed the compilation, it is now impossible to determine. They were persons, however, as we may reasonably suppose, well qualified for the undertaking, who collected what were known to be the genuine proverbs of Solomon, from the various writings in which they were dispersed, and arranged them in their present order. Whether the preceding twenty-four chapters, which, doubtless,

* "These are also Proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out."—(Chap. xxv. 1.) "*Quæ sic intelligo, sequentes Parabolas esse quoque Salomonis, itidem ut superiores; verum a viris Ezechix fuisse collectas et descriptas; non et præcedentes, quod existimavit interpres Arabs.*"—Huetius, *Dem. Evangel. Prop. iv. p. 239, Francof. 1722.*

existed in a combined form previous to the additional collection, were compiled by the author, or some other person, is quite uncertain. Both collections, however, being made at so early a period, is a satisfactory evidence, that the Proverbs are the genuine production of Solomon, to whom they are ascribed; for from the death of Solomon, to the reign of Hezekiah, according to the Bible chronology, was a period of 249 years, or, according to Dr. Hales, in his *New Analysis of Chronology*, 263 years; too short a space to admit of any forgery or material error; as either must have been immediately detected by the worthies who flourished during the virtuous reign of Hezekiah.

An argument in favour of the authenticity of the work, arising from the inspired wisdom of Solomon, must not be overlooked. Whether he is to be considered in the light of a prophet, is a question upon which the opinions of the ancient Fathers and modern critics have been divided.* Its determination is not of much importance, since we know from the sacred history, that his natural powers were assisted and exalted by divine illumination, and that “ God

* Carpzovii *Introductio ad Lib. Canon*, par. 2, cap. iv. § 2.

gave Solomon wisdom and understanding," so that his "wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East country, and all the wisdom of Egypt." We are likewise informed, that he spake three thousand proverbs; and if they are not, in part at least, contained in the work ascribed to him in the sacred canon, where are they to be found? The supposition of their total loss is incompatible with the admiration and reverence with which the Jewish people looked up to their Sovereign, so renowned for his opulence, his power, and his wisdom. If they would never have been suffered wholly to perish by his devoted subjects, why should we doubt, that the work which bears his name actually contains a collection of his authentic proverbs?*

When to this it is added, that no suppositious work could have been palmed upon the Israelites without immediate detection; that, if Solomon had not been the author of the book, it would not have been admitted into the sacred canon

* St. Jerom supposes, that this book really contains three thousand proverbs, though in this he is certainly mistaken, as it scarcely contains half that number. Perhaps, the number three thousand in 1 Kings, iv. 32, is to be understood indefinitely for a very great number; as it was customary with the Hebrews to put a definite for an indefinite number. Otherwise it may be supposed, that the Proverbs contain the chief of the three thousand, or the sum and substance of them.

as his work ; and that it has been transmitted to posterity as his, by the voice of uninterrupted tradition ; we cannot hesitate to ascribe it to the philosophic King of Israel.

That the book of Proverbs, with the exception of the two last chapters, is the genuine production of Solomon, is thus confirmed with as strong evidence as the nature of the case well admits. Nevertheless, Grotius, from the love of singularity which unfortunately adhered to that great man, and rendered his learned labours less serviceable to the cause of biblical literature, supposes it to have been a compilation from a variety of authors who had preceded Solomon. Though this hypothesis has met with the approbation of Eichhorn, and some other writers, it is a mere conjecture, unsupported by even the shadow of evidence. A hardy assertion is easily made, but will not be easily adopted by the cautious investigator of truth. The book comes down to us as the composition of the royal Sage ; its genuineness is attested by its title, its reception into the canon, and its acknowledgment by the Jewish church : it therefore requires something more than mere conjecture to overturn so clear and decisive a testimony. Nothing else, however, has been produced to

invalidate it; and I cannot, upon grounds so slight, give up the authenticity of any book in the sacred volume, or suffer my confidence to be shaken in the canonicity of any composition which has been admitted, by the Jewish church, into the number of inspired writings.

It may be observed, *en passant*, that the method in which the Proverbs were collected accounts for some repetitions observable in the book; repetitions scarcely avoidable in compiling them from different quarters, and various sources.* Yet it might have happened, that, if they had been collected by the divinely-enlightened author himself, he would have admitted a few repetitions, for the sake of reiterating some useful maxim, and enforcing some valuable truth.

With respect to the two last chapters, commentators have entertained a variety of opinions; some conjecturing that Solomon describes himself under the appellations of Agur and Lemuel; others, that

* Simon, *Hist. Crit. du V. T.* lib. i. cap. 4. Christ. Ben. Michælis, (father of the celebrated J. David Michælis,) *Præfat. ad Notas Ueberiores in Prov. Salomonis*, § 29. Jahn, *Introductio ad Lib. Sac.* § 182. p. 398, Viennæ, 1814.

these persons were interlocutors with him; and many, that they are the real productions of those whose names are prefixed. The two first opinions are destitute of sufficient evidence to produce a rational conviction. The thirtieth chapter is entitled, "The words of Agur, the son of Jakeh," and the thirty-first, "The words of king Lemuel;" and it is surely most consistent with the literal interpretation to understand these titles as implying, that these chapters are the composition, or, at least, the compilation, of two persons, whose names were Agur and Lemuel. Scripture history, indeed, affords us no information respecting their situation and character; but there must have been sufficient reason for regarding their works in the light of inspired productions, or they would not have been admitted into the sacred canon. They are called Massa, a term frequently applied to the undoubted productions of the prophetic spirit; and it is not improbable, that the authors meant, by the adoption of this term, to lay claim to the character of inspiration.* A succession

* "משל, quod ex etymo est, *eloquium, oraculum, λογιον*, non magis ad vaticinia de rebus futuris, quam ad omnia Dei eloquia pertinet, illa etiam quæ salutarem doctrinam morumque præcepta pandunt."—Michælis, *Notæ et Epim. in Lowthi Prælect.* p. 113, Oxon. 1810.

of virtuous and eminent men, favoured with divine illumination, flourished in Judæa till the final completion of the sacred code; and most likely many more than those whose writings have been preserved.* Agur may, then, have been one of those prophets whom divine Providence raised up to comfort or admonish his chosen people; and Lemuel may have been some neighbouring prince, the son of a Jewish woman, by whom he was taught the Massa contained in the thirty-first chapter. These, of course, can only be considered as mere conjectures; for, in the absence of historic evidence, who can venture to pronounce with certainty?

The opinion, however, that Agur and Lemuel are appellations of Solomon, is sanctioned by so many and such respectable writers, that it demands a more particular examination.

The knowledge of names was anciently regarded as a matter of the highest importance, in order to understand the nature of the persons or things which

* “Semper inclaruit Judæa viris afflatu divino actis, neque historiam reipublicæ Israeliticæ legisse putandus est, qui præter sedecem prophetas, quorum fragmenta et orationes extant, alios vixisse negarit.”—Doederlein, Scholia in cap. xxx. 1.

they designate; and, in the opinion of the Rabbins, preferable even to the study of the written Law.* The Heathens paid considerable attention to it, as appears from the *Cratylus* of Plato; and some of the Christian Fathers entertained very favourable notions of such knowledge.† The Jewish Doctors, it is true, refined upon the subject with an amazing degree of subtilty, grounding upon it many ridiculous ideas and absurd fancies: yet it is unquestionable, that many of the proper names in Scripture are significant and characteristic.‡ Thus, the names Eve, Cain, Seth, Noah, Abraham, Israel, &c. were imposed by reason of their being expressive of the several characters of the persons whom they represent.§ Reasoning from analogy, we may infer, that all the proper names in the Old Testament, at their original imposition, were intended to denote some quality or circumstance in the person or thing to which they belong; and though many, from transference, have ceased to be personally characteristic, yet are they

* Ficini Argument. in *Cratyl.* Platonis.

† St. Jerom, *Liber de Interp. Nom. Heb.* vol. ii. ed. Martian. Origen contra Cels. lib. i. § 24, 25. Eusebius, *Præparat. Evangel.* lib. xi. cap. 6.

‡ Simonis, *Onomasticum*, Sect. Prælim. § 2, 15. Shuckford's *Connection*, lib. ix.

§ Gen. iii. 20, iv. 1, iv. 25, v. 29, xvii. 5, xxxii. 29.

all significative. A variety of authors, whom Wolfius has enumerated in his *Bibliotheca Hebræa*, have laboured to investigate this signification; but, of all the works explanatory of the proper names, which I have had an opportunity of consulting, by far the most learned and ingenious is the *Onomasticum of Simonis*. The explanation in the sixth volume of the *London Polyglott*, and in the *Concordances of Cruden and Calasio*, is very defective.

As the custom of imposing descriptive names prevailed in the primitive ages, it is not impossible, that Agur and Lemuel may be appropriated to Solomon, and Jakeh to David, as mystic appellations significative of their respective characters. It is even some confirmation of this opinion, that Solomon is denominated Jedidiah (*beloved of the Lord*) by the prophet Nathan;* and that, in the book of Ecclesiastes, he styles himself Koheleth, or the Preacher. Nevertheless, this hypothesis does not appear to rest upon a firm foundation. It is foreign to the simplicity of the sacred penmen, and contrary to their custom in similar cases, to adopt a mystic name, without either explaining it, or alleging the reasons for its adoption.

* 2 Sam. xii. 25.

In the names Eve, Cain, Seth, Noah, &c. before alluded to; in the appellation Nabal; in the ænigmatical names in the first chapter of Hosea; in the descriptive names given to places; as, Beersheba, Jehovah Jireh, Peniel, Bethel, Gilgal;* and in many other instances, the meaning of the terms is either explained, or the circumstances are mentioned which led to their selection. When Solomon is called Jedidiah, it is added, that it was “because of the Lord;” and when he styles himself Koheleth, an explanatory clause is annexed, describing himself “the son of David, king of Jerusalem.” But if Solomon be meant by the titles Agur and Lemuel, he is so called without any statement of the reasons for their application, and without any explanation of their import; a circumstance unusual with the sacred writers, and the reverse to what is practised in the book of Proverbs, where his proper name, “Solomon,” is attributed to him in three different places.†

Nor is anything characteristic of the Jewish Monarchs discoverable in the terms themselves. Jakeh, which denotes *obedient*, is no more applicable to

* 1 Sam. xxv. 25; Gen. xxvi. 33, xxii. 14, xxxii. 30, xxxv. 15; Jos. v. 9.

† Prov. i. 1, x. i, xxv. 1.

David than to Nathan, or any other personage of eminent worth and piety among the Israelites. The name of Agur is not of easy explanation; some giving it the sense of *recollectus*, that is, recovered from his errors, and become penitent; an explanation more applicable to David than to Solomon.* Simonis, in his *Lexicon*, says, it may, *perhaps*, denote “him who applies to the study of wisdom;” an interpretation very suitable to the royal Philosopher, but not supported by adequate authority; and in his *Onomasticum* he explains it in a different manner.† Others suppose that it means *collector*; though it has been argued, that, as it has a passive form, it cannot have an active sense.‡ But this is not a valid objection, as several examples may be produced from the Bible of a similar form with an active signification.§ If such be its meaning, it is little suitable to Solomon, who was not the collector or compiler, but the author of the Proverbs. With respect to the name Lemuel; it signifies, *one that is for God, or devoted to God*;

* Poli Synop. Cocceii Lex. Heb. ed. Schulz, in אגור and יקח. Witsii Miscel. Sac. lib. i. cap. 18, § 27.

† “אגור, *collectus*, scil. ad reliquos liberos, vel ex Arab. *in præmium datus, repensus*.”—Onomast. p. 416.

‡ Gussetii Commentarii Ling. Heb. in אגור.

§ See the note chap. viii. 30.

and is not, therefore, peculiarly descriptive of Solomon.* It appears, then, that nothing can be inferred from the signification of the names Agur and Lemuel in support of the conjecture, that they are appellations of Solomon.†

The contents, likewise, of the two chapters in question strongly militate against this hypothesis. The second and third verses of the thirtieth chapter do not accord with the character of Solomon. They may, I am aware, be so paraphrased as only to imply a modest confession of native ignorance and imbecility while unenlightened by inspiration; a confession which might drop from the tongue of any

* But Schultens contends, that Lemuel signifies the same as Jedidiah, a name given to Solomon by the prophet Nathan, 2 Sam. xii. 25; and, in proof of this position, he derives Lemuel from לֵא *Deus*, and the Arabic لاء *injecit manum rei et totam cepit*, as it is explained in Golius, (Lex. Arab. p. 2160.) Hence, says Schultens, לֵא-לֵא, et suppresso ex lege *Analogiæ* priori Aleph, לֵא-לֵא signat *currissimum Dei peculium*, sive *eum quem sibi totum vindicavit*.—(Comment. in Prov. xxxi. 1.) This far-fetched etymology will, I think, have few supporters: besides, to derive a word partly from Hebrew, and partly from Arabic, I cannot but consider as a kind of etymological dreaming. Far preferable is it to take מ as an expletive added to ל; and hence לֵא-לֵא is the same as לֵא, i. e. that is God's, or devoted to God.—Poli Synop. Simonis, Onomast. p. 503.

† A philological argument respecting this question is discussed in the note to ch. xxxi. 2.

prophet or inspired teacher: but let the reader judge whether, in the natural and unforced sense of the words, Solomon could say of himself, "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy:" and whether this does not contradict his own express declaration, "Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem; yea, my heart hath great experience of wisdom and knowledge."*

The thoughts and sentiments of the thirty-first chapter have Lemuel's mother for their author; and Lemuel can only be considered as the publisher, having, most likely, written them down and given them publicity. Some writers, not content with extenuating the conduct of Bathsheba, have emblazoned her character with excessive eulogy;† but, however guiltless she may have been in the destruction of Uriah, and with whatever excuses her connexion with David may be varnished over, (though no softening, no art can dispossess adultery of its criminality,)

* Ecclesiastes, i. 16.

† Delany's *Life of David*, lib. iv. cap. 21.

yet this is certain, that she is not distinguished by the sacred historian for inspired knowledge and superior wisdom ; and it is not probable, that she would presume to give dictatorial advice to a son who was trained by so wise and excellent a father as David, and who, probably, was under the tutorage of the prophet Nathan. Still less likely is it, that her maternal admonitions, whatever they might have been, would be recorded by her son, who was so eminent for wisdom, and so much better qualified to deliver lessons worthy of being transmitted to posterity.

When all these circumstances are taken into consideration, together with the extreme improbability that Solomon should be denominated three times by his proper name, and afterwards, in the same work, by two different ænigmatical names, we are fully warranted in rejecting the notion, that the wise Monarch is designed by the appellations Agur and Lemuel. And it seems most reasonable, as before observed, to consider Agur and Lemuel as real personages: the former, the author of the thirtieth chapter; the latter, the publisher of the thirty-first; but with whose history we are entirely unacquainted.

The canonical authority of the book of Proverbs is attested by its reception among the sacred writings

of the Jews; and is further established, beyond the possibility of doubt, by the numerous citations of it in the Christian Scriptures. Whatever deference may be paid to Jewish tradition, the canonicity of the books in the Hebrew Bible must ultimately rest upon the testimony of Christ and his Apostles. "The writings of the Old Testament," says a divine no less distinguished for sound judgment than extensive erudition, "which received the *sanction of our Saviour*, are the writings, and the *only* writings of the *Old Testament* which can be admitted into the Canon of Scripture by those who bear the name of *Christian*. But the Scriptures which HE sanctioned were the very Scriptures which are *now* contained in the Hebrew Bible, and which constitute (in the Old Testament) the *Canon of the Church of England*."* The Proverbs not only receive the general sanction of our Saviour by which he ratified the Jewish canon,† but are frequently quoted as canonical Scripture by the inspired writers of the New Testament. "This book," as Michaelis observes, "is frequently quoted by the Apostles, who considered it a treasure of revealed morality, from which the Christians were to derive their rules of conduct, and the canonical

* Bishop Marsh's *Comparative View of the Churches of England and Rome*, cap. v. p. 101.

† Luke, ch. xxiv. 44.

authority of no part of the Old Testament is so ratified by the evidence of quotations as that of the Proverbs. But it is remarkable, that the Wisdom of Jesus, the Son of Sirach, which has so striking an affinity with the book of Proverbs, is not quoted, in a single instance, by the Apostles and Evangelists, and the difference between canonical and apocryphal is nowhere so strongly marked as in this example. We may hence infer, that every commentator on the Greek Testament ought to be intimately acquainted with the Septuagint version of the book of Proverbs, and that every Christian divine should consider it as the chief source of scriptural morality.* Not only do the Apostles manifest their familiarity with it by direct quotations, but likewise by a multiplicity of allusions, which become more visible by comparing their writings in the original Greek with the book of Proverbs in the Septuagint version.†

* Michaelis, *Introduct. to the New Testament*, by Dr. Marsh, c. v. § 1.

† The following enumeration of citations of the Proverbs in the New Testament, though not complete, is taken from Carpzov.

Prov. iii. 7, cum	Rom. xii. 16.	Prov. iii. 11, cum	Heb. xii. 5, 6.
x. 12,	1 Pet. iv. 8.	et 12,	et Apoc. iii. 19.
xi. 31,	1 Pet. iv. 18.	xvii. 13,	Rom. xii. 17.
xvii. 27,	Jac. i. 19.		1 Thes. v. 15.
xx. 9,	1 Joh. i. 8.		1 Pet. iii. 9.
xxvi. 11,	2 Pet. ii. 22.	xx. 20,	Matt. xv. 4.
i. 16,	Rom. iii. 10, 15.		Marc. vii. 10.
iii. 31,	Jac. iv. 6.	xxv. 21,	Rom. xii. 20.

The Rabbins are reported to have deliberated concerning the rejection of Proverbs, as well as of Ecclesiastes and Canticles, from the sacred canon, on account of some apparently irreconcilable contradictions; but, finding that these were in appearance only, not real, they abandoned the design.* Upon this fact Semler remarks, that, if it had been accounted canonical in the time of Solomon and Hezekiah, what dolts must those have been who afterwards wished to place it among the apocryphal books.† The inference from this is obvious, that the Proverbs could not have been received as a work of divine authority in the time of Solomon and Hezekiah, or the Jewish Doctors could never have entertained so preposterous an idea as that of

* Carpzovii Introduct. ad Lib. Canon. par. 2, cap. iv. § 7. Christ. Ben. Michaelis, Præfat. § 24. Wolfii Bibliotheca Hebræa, vol. ii. p. 119.

† “ Si vero olim, jam tempore Salomonis et Hiskia, pro canonica libro habitus atque in templo asservatus fuit; quam stultos fuisse oporteret eos, qui postea talem librum voluerint abscondere.”—(Semleri Apparatus ad Liberalem V. T. Interp. lib. i. cap. 4, p. 200.) By “abscondere” is meant *αποκρυπτειν*, i. e. to place among the apocryphal books, to declare it apocryphal; for such is the meaning of ללל in Shabbath, cap. 2, fol. 30, B. where it is said,

ואף ספר משלי בקשו לגנוז שהיו רבריו סותרין זה את זה

Etiam librum Proverbiorum voluerunt (Sapientes) abscondere (i. e. *pro apocrypho declarare*) eo quod verba ejus se invicem everterent.—(Quoted by Wolfius, Biblioth. Heb. vol. ii. p. 119.) This objection, however, will fall to the ground, if we accede to Bishop Marsh's opinion, (Notes

rejecting it from the canon. But this attempt of the Rabbins is so far from being prejudicial to the canonical authority of the book, that it supplies an argument in its favour; for it proves that they were scrupulous in the admission of books into the sacred canon, and would not place any among the writings of the inspired volume, till their genuineness and authority were confirmed by unexceptionable evidence; and, as Huet argues, their deliberating about expunging the Proverbs from the canon, and yet not doing it, is a proof that their nefarious intentions were overpowered by the force of truth, and that, after weighing the arguments on both sides, they acknowledged its genuineness and inspiration.*

Since, then, this work of the royal Author has been

to Michaelis, *Introd. cap. iii. § 1.*) that מן does not mean "apocryphal, as we understand the word, for the ancient Jews never doubted the divine authority of the Proverbs, Solomon's Song, or Ecclesiastes;" and that it "was applied to books divinely inspired, and included in the sacred canon." The word does, indeed, sometimes denote those parts of the canonical Scriptures which were only forbidden to be read; (Castell, *Lex. Hept. 112*;) but the reason given for the Jews wishing מן to conceal or lay aside the Proverbs, seems to imply rejection from the canon.—See Buxtorf, *Lex. Chald. Targ. et Rab. in voc.*

* "Nam quod id facere cogitarunt, nec fecerunt tamen, indicio est nefariam ipsorum voluntatem vi veritatis fuisse oppressam, et utrimque pensitatis rationibus Libri tandem γνησιότητα et sanctitatem eos agnovisse."—Huetii *Dem. Evangel. Prop. iv. p. 242.*

received, after mature examination, into the Jewish canon, which was sanctioned by our Saviour; and since the Apostles have frequently cited it as Scripture, its canonicity rests upon a basis that cannot be subverted. Yet, strange as it may appear, its divine authority has been assailed by some writers, who would degrade it to the rank of an apocryphal composition. But their attempt has been unavailing; the Christian world has not yet been induced to believe that our Lord was wrong in confirming the canon of which it forms a part, and that the Apostles were grossly mistaken in appealing to it as a sacred record of scriptural morality. Invulnerable to the shafts of its adversaries, it has withstood the hesitating dislike of Simon, the open attack of Spinoza, and the cool opposition of Le Clerc. It were a waste of time to review the cavils of these writers, after the complete refutation of them in the highly valuable Introduction of Carpzov, and the *Miscellanea Sacra* of Witsius.*

An attempt of a more recent date has been made by Semler to cast a shade of doubt upon the authenticity and inspiration of the book of Proverbs.† What-

* Carpzovii *Introd. ad Lib. Canon.* par. 2, cap. iv. § 7. Witsii *Miscel. Sac.* vol. i. cap. 18, § 31, et seq.

† Semleri *Apparatus ad Liberalem Vet. Test. Interpret.* Halæ, 1773.

ever may have been the intentions of this learned critic, his work is calculated to produce a theological scepticism, which is but little removed from unbelief, and must, in the end, terminate in open infidelity. In this sceptical spirit one writer merely expresses a doubt respecting the inspiration of some parts of the Scriptures; another is of opinion, that a few books may safely be rejected from the canon; by some it is maintained, that certain tenets, though they may be true, need not be inculcated as of absolute importance; while by others it is asserted, that many doctrines, held sacred by the great body of Christians in all ages, are the mere offspring of narrow bigotry and prejudice, “the wretched relic of a dark and barbarous age,” and, consequently, unworthy of regard in this period of reason and intellectual light.* Thus one article of our faith must be surrendered after another, till, by stripping religion of all its essentials, a broad way is prepared to the profession of undisguised and blasphemous infidelity. It behoves the friends of pure primitive Christianity to regard, with watchful eye, the progress of this insidious enemy;

* Those who are acquainted with the theological works of modern Germany, and with some, alas! in our own country, will easily exemplify these remarks.

lest, after the outworks are severally given up, the citadel will at length be obliged to capitulate. Semler does not, in so many words, reject the book of Proverbs from the number of sacred writings ; but some of his assertions are totally irreconcilable with its canonicity, and it must be apparent to the attentive reader, that the drift of his remarks is to discredit its divine authority. It is unnecessary, however, to enter into a detailed refutation, as few of his observations are new, most of them gratuitous ; and to all this general reply is sufficient, that, if the view taken of the Proverbs in this Dissertation be correct, no weight can be allowed to the sceptical doubts of Semler. To question the divine authority of any writing, or of any part of any writing in those comprised in the Bible, is to open a door for unbelief, the immediate forerunner of impiety and flagitiousness. If the Scriptures are not so far inspired as to be exempt from error, they cannot be regarded as an infallible rule of faith and manners ; and if they are not so regarded, their efficacy will be no greater than that of the moral writings of Xenophon and Plutarch, of Cicero and Seneca. The inspiration of the Bible must be maintained, must be believed ; otherwise it cannot be the standard of faith, of morals, and of sacred knowledge. “ To deny it absolutely,” says a

modern writer, "and thereby to reduce the sacred writings to common history, was, with a few exceptions, reserved to our own times. If there be a doctrine to which the '*semper, ubique, et ab omnibus*,' is applicable, it is the divine inspiration of the Old and New Testament:"* a sentiment so judicious, so pious, that it merits the approbation of every friend to the real interests of man.

The book of Proverbs, then, is of canonical authority, and, with the exception of the two last chapters, is the genuine production of Solomon, king of Israel. The nature and character of the work still remain to be considered.

In a critical examination of these aphorisms, the first thing that attracts our notice is, the poetical dress in which they are clothed. That they are written in metre is evident, not only from the peculiar accentuation by which the Masoretes have distinguished the metrical books of the Old Testament, but from the more certain characters of Hebrew poetry, as they have been investigated and illustrated by Bishop

* Butler's *Horæ Biblicæ*, vol. i. p. 249, Lond. 1807.

Lowth, the celebrated author of the *Hebrew Prælections*. The poetical form of so large a portion of the Scriptures has often excited the attention of lettered curiosity; and various reasons have been advanced to account for a circumstance which cannot but appear somewhat extraordinary to an European mind.* But, perhaps, the true reason is to be sought in the state of society, together with the manners and habits of the earlier ages. The dispensations of Providence have ever been adapted to existing circumstances; and a metrical form may have been peculiarly suited to the character and situation of those to whom the poetical part of Revelation was immediately addressed. A few reflections on this subject will not, perhaps, be deemed irrelevant to the purpose of this Dissertation.

Poetical composition has been stated to be anterior to prose; and this representation accords with the condition of man in the infancy of society. The wandering savage, roused with the exultation of victory, spurred on to phrensy with wild carousal, or sunk into excessive, though transitory, grief at

* See Carpzovii *Introd. ad Lib. Canon.* par. 2, cap. i. § 11.

recent calamity, would frequently pour out the violence of his feelings in the rude, but impassioned, strains of poetry. The boldest figures and the loftiest images could alone adequately express the fervent passions of man in an uncivilized state; and nothing but the expression of ardent feeling and unrestrained imagination, accompanied with song, and, as a necessary consequence, artless versification, could ever win the attention or captivate the mind of the untutored barbarian. In song he would describe the fortune of the battle or the chase; in song he would celebrate the successful valour of his kinsman and chieftain, or lament their fall; in song he would praise and magnify his country's gods; and these songs, repeated from father to son, would form the first medium of traditionary history and knowledge. Travellers concur in describing the power and prevalence of song among the roving hordes of America.*

Even after man had emerged from the state of savage wildness, and, in the progress of civilization, the predominance of the passions had been in some degree repressed, and reason had begun to raise her

* See Dr. Brown's *History of the Rise and Progress of Poetry*, and Jahn, *Archæologia Biblica*, § 90, 8vo. Vienna, 1814.

yet feeble voice, melody and song would still possess powerful charms. Hence, the first beams of knowledge dawned upon mankind through the medium of poetic numbers. Orpheus, Musæus, Amphion, Thamyris, Hesiod, poets as well as philosophers, were the precursors of those philosophic luminaries who have immortalized Greece; and among every people with whose early history we are acquainted, songs, and poems, and metrical aphorisms were primarily instrumental to their civilization and improvement. As poetry is so particularly suitable to first stages of society, divine Providence permitted a considerable part of Revelation to be delivered in a poetic garb. It may, likewise, have been the mode of expression which a mind impelled by the divine afflatus would most naturally adopt; certainly it affords a powerful aid to the memory; and celestial truth would, probably, make a deeper impression, in the early ages of mankind, when surrounded with the graces and melodies of rhythm.*

Among the metrical books of the Old Testament the Proverbs of Solomon hold a conspicuous rank.

* Buxtorf, *Thesaurus Gram. Ling. Heb.* p. 625, Basil, 1651. Bishop Lowth thinks it not improbable, that the earliest effusions of poetry were in praise of the Creator.—*Prælect. de Sac. Poes. Heb.* p. 21, Oxon, 1810.

Less sublime than Job, less argumentative than Ecclesiastes, less poetic than the Canticles, and many parts of the prophetic writings, and destitute of those soft and benign strains of piety by which many of the Psalms are distinguished, the book of Proverbs, notwithstanding, shares in the characteristic beauties of the Oriental muse, elegance of imagery, glowing description, and boldness of personification. The Asiatics, profuse in the employment of figures of every description, are particularly daring and audacious in the use of prosopopœias. Endowed with warmer feelings and more vivid imaginations than the inhabitants of Europe, they delight to revel among ideal creations; voice and intelligence are attributed to the mute, inanimate parts of terrestrial nature; they live, they breathe, they speak, awakened into life by the magic of poetic fancy. Abstract qualities, and the affections of the heart, are embodied into personal existence; and, by a power of invention singularly wild and enthusiastic, they give “a local habitation and a name” to that which might appear too light and aerial to receive a form, even by the plastic power of imagination.*

* “ Apud eos (scil. Asiaticos) omnia vivunt; omnia animantur. Colloquuntur inter se flores, aves, arbores: personam etiam induunt

Some instances of poetic enthusiasm may be observed in this production of the royal Author, and some examples of personification, which, if they cannot be classed among the highest flights of Eastern fancy, are, nevertheless, embellished with such elegance of imagery, as renders them, in a high degree, beautiful and impressive. Though, in the charms of high-wrought poetry, it must yield to several parts of the sacred volume, yet, in judicious brevity, in elegant conciseness, in nice adjustment of expressions, and in that terseness of diction which gives weight to precept, and poignancy to aphoristic truth, it stands preeminent, and remains an illustrious monument to the glory of its author. The character of the Proverbs, drawn by a consummate judge of sacred poetry, is, “that the work consists of two parts. The former, including the first nine chapters, is a kind of exordium, and is varied, elegant, sublime, and truly poetical; the natural order is generally observed, and the parts are aptly connected together; it is embellished with very beautiful descriptions and prosopœias, and adorned with the most finished style,

notiones illæ abstractæ, pulchritudo, justitia, moeror, hilaritas; rident prætæ, canunt sylvæ, lætatur coelum; &c.—Sir Wm. Jones, *Poes. Asiat. Commentarii*, p. 168. ed. Eichhorn, Lips. 1777.

together with every kind of poetical ornament ; so that it scarcely yields in beauty to any specimen of sacred poetry : the latter part, including the remainder of the book, consists almost wholly of single proverbs and sentences, having little in them sublime, or even poetical, beyond the acumen and neatness appropriate to the aphorism.* If it were not presumption to call in question the opinion of this elegant writer, who has so admirably delineated the beauties of the Hebrew muse, it might be doubted, whether this character of the Proverbs be perfectly just ; whether he has not estimated the first part too high, and the second too low ; whether a portion of the former be either “ sublime,” or “ truly poetical,” and whether something “ poetical” may not be discovered in the latter.

But it is not only from the elegances of poetical

* “ Hujusce operis duæ sunt partes ; prima, quæ est Proœmii cujusdam loco, novem priora Capita continet ; estque varia, elegans, sublimis, verèque poetica ; rerum ordine plerumque conservato, partibusque inter se apte connexis ; pulcherrimis descriptionibus, et Prosopopœiis illustrata ; compositione politissima, omnique poetico ornatu illuminata ; ita ut haud ulli sacræ Poeseos parti venustatis laude cedat : altera pars inde ad finem Voluminis, singulis fere constat Parabolis sive Sententiis, vix quidquam habens sublime, aut etiam poeticum, ultra quod Gnomæ acumen et concinnitas admittit.”—Lowthi Prælect. de Sac. Poes. Heb. p. 313, Oxon. 1610.

composition, and from the beauties of diction peculiar to the proverb, with which it so much abounds, that the book derives its merit: it claims our reverence as an invaluable treasure of heaven-taught wisdom. Among the productions, whether of sacred or profane literature, it stands unrivalled for moral aphorisms, practical observations, and sententious truths. A pure morality pervades the whole work, ramified into a variety of branches, all tending to enforce the duties which we owe to ourselves, our neighbour, and our God. Religion, as the foundation of all virtue, is portrayed, under the denomination of wisdom, with such correctness and precision, such splendour of ornament, and brilliancy of colouring, as render her altogether lovely and attractive. A variety of remarks are dispersed upon the character, temper, and behaviour of mankind, which indicate a penetrating and sagacious mind, thoroughly conversant with human affairs; while the royal Sage does not disdain to furnish us with some maxims and admonitions respecting that prudential conduct, which, if it cannot aspire to the praise of exalted virtue, is yet of much utility in the pilgrimage of life.*

* “ In aphorismis vero illis (scil. Salomonis,) præter alia magis theologica, reperies liquido haud pauca præcepta et monita civilia

Several of the Proverbs, which relate to human conduct and the affairs of life, are not delivered as *universal* truths, but as true in general, true upon the whole, though some exceptions may possibly be discovered; and some only convey a remark upon the fortunes and characters of men, unaccompanied either with praise or censure, such as a penetrating mind would form from a close inspection of the dispositions and transactions of mankind. Since we are by nature social beings, and must live in a state of social union, it is important to become acquainted with the winding recesses of the human heart; the follies, passions, and prejudices which agitate the species; the common events which happen in an intercourse with the world; the modes, times, and circumstances which modify the conduct: and Solomon occasionally notices such of these as are most useful to be impressed upon the minds of the young and unsuspecting. The world with its inhabitants, and the various occurrences of life, are spread before the view of the wise Monarch; with piercing eye he glances at the ever-changing prospect; sometimes pointing out

præstantissima, ex profundis quidem sapientiæ penetralibus scaturientia, atque in amplissimum varietatis campum excurrentia."—Lord Bacon, de Augment. Scient. lib. viii. cap. 2.

scenes, which, though deserving of praise, he praises not; sometimes indicating events and circumstances really reprehensible, which, nevertheless, he does not condemn. He seems to have thought it sufficient to mark them out to the attention of the reader, who might draw the proper inference without being guided by the censure or eulogium of another.

Some of the truths in this noble collection are conveyed under the veil of allegory, apologue, and ænigma, as was usual in the earlier ages of antiquity. Those who aspired to the character of wise men used to communicate the result of their reflections under the cover of fable, parable, and ænigmatical expressions; either supposing that the difficulty of discovering the meaning would enhance its value;* or that such a vehicle of truth was the best means of awakening the attention, and convincing the understandings of their contemporaries. Thus the queen of Sheba came to prove Solomon with hard questions; and, according to Josephus, that Monarch and Hiram, king of Tyre, mutually transmitted riddles

* *Θρασηα γαρ ουσα η ανθρωπινη ψυχη, τα μεν εν ποσιν ησπον τιμα, του δε αποντος θαυμαστικως εχει.*—Max. Tyrii Diss. 29, p. 349, Oxon. 1677.

to each other for the exercise of their sagacity.* This, also, was a practice familiar to the ancient Greeks, for Plutarch represents the seven Wise Men entertaining themselves with proposing and solving allegorical and ænigmatical questions; and Maximus Tyrius affirms, that ænigmas abound both among the poets and philosophers.† The Egyptian priests involved their doctrine in such obscure symbolical language, as to be unintelligible except to the initiated.‡ The Orientals, indulging in tropes and figures to a boundless extent, were particularly fond of symbolical and ænigmatical language, which both delighted their imaginations, and exercised their ingenuity.§ No wonder, then, that Solomon, in compliance with established custom, sometimes veiled his instructions under an apologue, a symbol, or an ænigma; but he uses them with a sparing hand, proposing his maxims, for the most part, without any thing ænigmatical, in his own terse and nervous phraseology.||

* Josephus, *Antiq. lib. viii. cap. 5, § 3.* See note to ch. i. 6.

† *Plutarchi Convivium septem Sapientum, vol. vi. p. 553, ed. Reiske. Max. Tyrii Diss. 29, p. 348. Παντα μεστα αινιγματων και παρα ποιηταις και φιλοσοφοις.*

‡ Jablonski *Pantheon Egypt. Prolegom. § 57.* The subject of the above paragraph is learnedly discussed in these *Prolegom. § 48—61.*

§ D'Herbelot, *Bibliothèque Orientale, voc. Algaz.*

|| Ο μιν γαρ Σολομων, θεοδωρητω σοφια κινουμενος, πασαν

The lessons of piety and virtue, inculcated with so much elegance in the Proverbs, are enforced on the principles of the Mosaic Law, which promises temporal rewards to obedience, and temporal punishment to disobedience. The author undoubtedly had a notion, however obscure, of a future state, for there are some clear intimations of another stage of

αυτου την γραφην, επ' ωφελεια και σωτηρια ψυχων, τω της θεοσεβειας ανετιθει λογω. γυμνασιον ε' ενεκα της των εντυγχανοντων διανοιας, σκοτεινοις εχρητο προσλημασι, και λογων στροφαις, και φοραις ει' αινιγματων προενηνεγμενοις.—(Eusebius contra Marcellum, lib. i. cap. 3, p. 17, C.) In speaking of the ænigmatical style, the expression does not exactly correspond with the signification that the word *Ænigma* now commonly bears: it denotes every kind of dark saying, whether it be by symbolical, allegorical, or obscurely figurative language. When the meaning is not plainly expressed, but conveyed in an allusion, in an obscure metaphor, under a remote image, or by means of a symbol, it comes under the denomination of ænigmatical. D'Herbelot, in mentioning the Oriental ænigmas, observes: “ Il faut remarquer que la plupart de ces Enigmes ne sont que des emblemes et des devises, que les Arabes, les Persans, et les Turcs comprennent sous les noms d' *Algaz* et de *Maama*.”—(Bibliothèque Orientale, *ibid.*) Burnet also remarks: “ *Hæc vox ænigma et ænigmaticum*, late sumitur, pro sermone obscuro, involucris et ambagibus tegente rem quam designat, vel materiam quam tractat; sive sit per modum quæstionis, mandati, aut orationis simplicis. Id enim Græcis est *αινιττεσθαι*, res sibi notas obscuris dictis significare; quod plures dicendi modos complecti potest. Denique apud Hebræos *משל* et *חידה* *proverbia* et *ænigmata*, omnes partis sapientis explere videntur; quod sententiose dictum est, scite graviturque, *משל* appellatur; quod mystice autem, ut solet doctrina arcana, *חידה*, dicitur.”—(Archæolog. Philosoph. lib. i. cap. 8, p. 123.) This distinction of the Hebrew words, however, is not always observed.—See the note on “dark sayings” ch. i. 6.

being;* but he nowhere employs it as the sanction of his precepts. A steady adherence to the dictates of sound wisdom he pronounces to be the way which leads to health, long life, and happiness; while the paths of wickedness and folly tend only to misery and destruction. He never enforces his doctrines and admonitions by the hopes of immortal glory, or the fears of eternal vengeance; the promised rewards and punishments are strictly confined to this life; but they are such motives as would operate powerfully upon the mind of a Jew, who believed in the temporal remuneration set forth in the Law of Moses.

While God continued to exercise an extraordinary superintending providence over the Israelites, the promises of temporal rewards and punishments, annexed to obedience and disobedience, were, doubtless, abundantly fulfilled. It has even been asserted, that “if they *were not* uniformly made good, Moses must, in a very few years, have stood convicted of palpable imposture: and, if such had been the case, the republic which he founded must soon have fallen to pieces; for its laws would be peculiarly liable

* Prov. ch. xii. 28, xiv. 32, xv. 11, xxi. 16, and perhaps xv. 24. Compare Eccles. iii. 21, xii. 7.

to contempt above all other laws, because the glaring imposture of their author had been openly detected by the event.”* But the veracity of Moses would be sufficiently attested, if the promises and threatenings were made good *generally* and *upon the whole*. Had they taken effect immediately and invariably, in such a manner as to render the fact absolutely incontrovertible, it would have overthrown the free-agency of man. There can be no virtue or vice, where there is not a liberty of choice; there can be no exercise of faith, where there is no room for doubt. Such an overwhelming evidence is inconsistent with the liberty of the will, so necessary to moral and responsible agents. There were always, then, some seeming exceptions, some apparent

* Faber's *Horæ Mosaicæ*, lib. i. sect. 2, cap. 3, p. 292, Lond. 1818, 2d edit. “What *appearances* soever,” says Bishop Warburton, “there may be of inequality in the administration of Providence, in the early times of the Jewish Theocracy, they are but *appearances*; that is, nothing which can really affect such a mode of administration.”—(Div. Legat. of Moses, lib. v. § 4.) Peters, in his Crit. Diss. on the book of Job, p. 262, et seq. supposes that this extraordinary providence extended over the Jews as a people, but did not include or infer an equal providence to particular persons. Such a providence, however, watching over the state seems necessarily to include a just remuneration to individuals: and the Mosaic promises of rewards and punishments consequent to obedience and disobedience must extend to the persons of the virtuous and vicious, or there would be no exercise of an extraordinary providence.

contradictions, sufficient to exercise the faith of the godly, and enough to furnish folly with ridicule, and impiety with an excuse.

Some exceptions to the retributive justice declared by Moses existed at the age of David, of Jeremiah, of Habakkuk, and of Malachi.* Bishop Warburton thinks, that the common cause of these complaints arose from the gradual withdrawing the extraordinary providence, which began to abate at the commencement of the regal government, and entirely ceased at the full reestablishment of the Jews after the captivity.† It would be difficult, however, to account for the rebellions, the murmurs, and the discontent among the Israelites, recorded in the Pentateuch, if the retribution had been uniformly apparent and indubitable. It is more probable, that some exceptions, or at least what were apparently such, always existed; designed to try the faith of the chosen people. The reasoning of a pious Jew, at the consideration of the seeming irregularities in the distribution of temporal blessings, is finely expressed by the Psalmist. “Verily,” says he, after contem-

* Ps. xxxvii. 1, 35; Jer. xii. 1, et seq.; Hab. i. 4; Mal. iii. 15.

† Div. Legat. lib. v. § 4.

plating the prosperity of the wicked, “ verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency; for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.” But when he went “ into the sanctuary of God,” when he viewed the divine dispensations with an eye of faith and confidence, he then saw that the prosperity of the wicked was of momentary duration; it was the shortlived brightness of a passing meteor. “ How,” says he, “ are they brought into desolation as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.”*

The moral writings of Solomon are not, by the absence of future sanctions, less useful to those who profess a purer and more spiritual religion. The beautiful pictures of virtue, the excellent advice, and the weighty truths with which they abound, are equally valuable in all ages, and to all persons. They constitute an unerring rule of practical utility. Nor should their influence be less, now that a higher sanction is revealed. If the Israelite were induced to observe these moral lessons by the expectation of temporal blessings, much more should the disciple of Christ by the glorious hope of immortality.

* Ps. lxxiii. 13, et seq.

Christianity teaches us to look for rewards beyond the narrow bounds of terrestrial existence. The faithful may suffer in this world, and their virtue may be tried in the school of adversity; but their hopes are elevated to a brighter region, where their momentary light afflictions will be remunerated with an exceeding eternal weight of glory.*

Some, indeed, have not scrupled to affirm, that the Proverbs, as a system of morality, are extremely defective; containing few things worthy the pen of an inspired writer, and supplying but little that can be profitable to Christians, who are blessed with so high a degree of spiritual knowledge. Grateful for the superior light of Evangelic truth, it would ill become us to despise any of the compositions in the Hebrew volume, all of which were undoubtedly admirably adapted to promote the designs of Providence, though their beams may be faint when compared with the meridian effulgence of Christianity. The Oracles of God will afford matter for serious reflection and devout admiration to the latest ages of the world; the more attentively they are examined, the more will they be esteemed; new beauties will

* 2 Cor. iv. 17.

daily present themselves; every perusal will bring fresh accessions of religious knowledge; and continued meditation upon inspired truth will ameliorate the heart, and, by encouraging a pious trust in God's mercy, and a humble, but joyful, hope of immortality, will contribute to the happiness of man, both now and for ever. The intrinsic excellence of the book of Proverbs points it out as an important part of the Holy Scriptures; and it has been the subject of reverent regard by the best and wisest men in the Jewish and Christian churches. The admiration of Christian antiquity is indicated by the appellation *Panaretos Sophia*, Wisdom embracing all virtue, which they gave to this compendium of morality and wisdom. The ancient Fathers unite in one grand chorus of unceasing panegyric. Parents taught their children this epitome of moral instruction; divines illustrated it in their public discourses; while saints and martyrs studied it for the guidance of their conduct, and the regulation of their lives.*

* The Proverbs are often called by the Fathers *Παναρητον σοφια*, Wisdom embracing all virtue, or rather, containing the precepts of all the virtues.—(Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. cap. 22. Carpzovii Introd. par. 2, cap. 4, § 1. Suiceri Thesaur. in both words.) The Jews, likewise, called both the Proverbs and Ecclesiastes ספרי חכמה, Books of Wisdom.—Christ. Ben. Michælis, Notæ Uberiores, præf. § 10. Wolfii Biblioth. Heb. vol. ii. p. 119; and Dr. Gill's Bible in Proverbs.

When the excellences of this production, the high tone of its piety, the purity of its morality, and the utility of its precepts, are duly considered, it can surely be no part of superior wisdom to undervalue its sacred contents. But it is not only entitled to our regard as a code of moral axioms, and as a system of practical morality; it demands a reverent examination on account of the evidence it bears to a tenet of transcendent importance. Though it seems to have been the leading object of the Author to inculcate the rules of duty and the precepts of wisdom, in one passage, at least, he touches upon a point of doctrine, and teaches, in strong and emphatic language, the Generation and Eternity of the Son of God.

Theologians of eminence, it must be acknowledged, have asserted, that the mystery of the Trinity is not discoverable in the sacred Oracles of the Jews;* but the inspired writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was of a different opinion, for he adduces certain parts of the Old Testament in proof of the Pre-eminence and Divinity of Christ. According to St. Matthew, the Divinity of our Lord is declared in

* Doederlein, *Institutio Theol. Christ.* vol. i. p. 379.

the prophecy of Isaiah, that “ a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”* Our Saviour himself appeals to the 110th Psalm in attestation of his superior nature; and he asserts generally, that there are things “ written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning him;” among which his essential Deity, we may reasonably suppose, is included.† The ancient Jewish church collected from the Hebrew Scriptures a notion of a Trinity of Persons in the Divine Essence, as has been demonstrated by the very learned Dr. Allix.‡ The primitive Fathers, likewise, universally appeal to the Old Testament in confirmation of the Divinity of the Son and Holy Ghost. It cannot, therefore, be safe to deny, in opposition to the concurring voice of the ancient Rabbins and Christian Doctors, supported by the infallible authority of the New Testament, that traces are to be found of a Triune God in the Hebrew Scriptures.§

* Isaiah,¹ vii. 14; Matt. i. 23. Also compare Isaiah, vi. 1, with John, xii. 41.

† Luke, xxiv. 44. Compare John, v. 39. See Matt. xxii. 44.

‡ Judgment of the Ancient Jewish Church, &c. See also Witsii *Judaus Christianizans*.

§ Bishop Burnet says: “ Though the expositions of some of them (i. e. passages of the O. T.) in the New Testament prove to us, who

The doctrine of the Trinity, it is true, is delivered in the Old Testament with some degree of obscurity; it is oftener to be inferred from the sacred text, than expressly declared in it; the full revelation of this important truth being reserved for the divine heralds of Christianity. Yet it was declared, in all probability, with as much clearness and perspicuity as was consistent with the chief design of the Mosaic Covenant, and with the character of the Israelites. While it was one grand object of the Jewish religion to inculcate the Unity of the Deity, a more express declaration of a Trinity of Persons in the Divine Essence might have interfered with that object; and, considering the proneness of the Jews to relapse into idolatry, in imitation of the surrounding nations, particularly of the Egyptians among whom they had long sojourned, might have given occasion to polytheism and idolatrous worship. It was agreeable, therefore, to Divine Wisdom to involve the doctrine of the Trinity in some degree of obscurity, during

acknowledge it, what was the true meaning of those passages; yet take the Old Testament in itself without the New, and it must be confessed, that it will not be easy to prove this article (*i. e.* the Trinity) from it." —(Expos. of the Thirty-nine Art. p. 37, fol. See also Bishop Kidder's *Demonst. of the Messias*, part 3, p. 81.) This may be granted; yet the Trinity is, to a certain extent, revealed in the Old Testament; otherwise how did the ancient Jews come by their notions of a Plurality in the Godhead?

the continuance of a dispensation designed to preserve the chosen people from idolatry, and to promulgate the Unity of the Godhead.*

Still the Old Testament does contain many intimations of a Plurality in the Divine Nature, which, when viewed by the light of Christianity, have a clearness and force beyond what they ever could have had upon the mind of the pious Israelite. Without enlarging upon this subject, which would require a volume in order to its full discussion, I cannot omit briefly noticing some of the arguments for a Plurality afforded by the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

1. God is denominated by terms of a plural form, which implies a Plurality of Persons in the Godhead. Thus, the word *Elohim*, *God*, is plural; (Gen. i. 1;) “Let us make man after our image;” (Gen. i. 26;) “Adam is become as one of us;” (Gen. iii. 22;) and

* I owe this observation to Theodoret. *Εν Αιγυπτῳ αὐτοὺς πλεῖστον διατριψάντας χρόνον, καὶ τὸν πολυθεὸν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων μεμαθηκότας θρησκείαν, ὁ πανσοφὸς Κύριος οὐκ ἐναργῶς ἀπαντὰ τα περὶ τῆς Τριάδος ἐξεπαιδευσε δόγματα, ἵνα μὴ προφασιν πολυθείας λαβῶσιν, εἰς τὸν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἐπιρρεπότες πλάνον, κ. τ. λ.*—Serm. 2, tom. iv. p. 496. See Suicer, Thesaur. Trias, iii. 1.

many similar expressions certainly denote a Plurality. And they are still more remarkable by occurring in the very beginning of a book, one chief design of which was, to inculcate the Unity of the Godhead. It is impossible to conceive, that Moses would have used such language, in such a place, had it not been intended to imply, that a Plurality did actually exist in the Unity of the Divine Nature.*

2. There is a Person in the Old Testament sometimes called "an Angel," and sometimes "Jehovah;" (Gen. xvi. 7, 13, xviii. 1, et seq. xxii. 15, 16, xxxi. 11, 13, xlviii. 15, 16; Exod. iii. 2, 4, 6, 15, xiii. 21, compared with xiv. 19, and other places;) but God the Father cannot be called an angel, for this appellation implies a ministerial office; but ministration is never ascribed to the Father in the Scriptures, and is incompatible with that priority of order which belongs to him; yet this Person, sometimes called an Angel, was God; because in him was the incommunicable name of Jehovah, and he was obeyed and worshipped as the Jehovah of Israel: it is concluded, then, that it must have been the Son of God.

* See the note to Prov. ch. ix, 10.

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3. God is frequently reported, in the Old Testament, to have appeared to the patriarchs and prophets; but “no man hath seen God (the Father) at any time;” (John, i. 18; 1 Tim. vi. 16; Heb. xi. 27;) the God who appeared, therefore, must have been God the Son. That Christ was the Angel of the Lord, or rather the Angel-Jehovah, who so frequently appeared in a corporeal form under the patriarchal and Levitical dispensations, and who was the Jehovah of the Hebrew church, is an opinion espoused by the most learned and able writers, both of ancient and modern times, and, as appears to me, capable of being amply vindicated by the testimony of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures.*

4. Besides these arguments, a number of passages contain, as it has been thought, intimations of a Plurality: but I must content myself with merely

* See Heidegger, *Hist. Patriarch. Exercit.* 3, § 12, et seq. Allix's *Judgment of the Jewish Church*, cap. 13, et seq. Bishop Bull, *Defens. Fid. Nic.* sect. 1, cap. 1. Dr. Waterland's *Defence*, Qu. 2. Dr. Randolph's *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, part 1. Faber's *Horæ Mosaicæ*, lib. ii, § 1, cap. 2. Doddridge's *Lectures*, Lect. 157. In H. Taylor's *Apology of Ben Mordecai*, Letters 2 and 3, much valuable matter relative to this subject may be found; though it is to be lamented, that it is mingled with his Arian prejudices.

referring to some of the principal texts : namely, Gen. i. 1, et seq. iii. 22, vi. 3, xi. 6, xvi. 7, et seq. xviii. 1, et seq. xix. 24, xxii. 12; Exod. iii. 2, et seq.; Numb. vi. 24; Psalm ii. 2, xxxiii. 6, xlv. 1, et seq. l. 1, lxviii. 18, (compare Ephes. iv. 7, et seq.) lxxviii. 18, (compare 1 Cor. x. 9,) xcvi. 7, (compare Heb. i. 6,) cvii. 20, cx. 1, et seq. cxxxix. 7; Prov. viii. 12, et seq. ix. 1, xxx. 4; Isaiah, vi. 3, (compare John, xii. 41,) vii. 14, (compare Matt. i. 23,) ix. 6, xxxiv. 16, xl. 3, (compare Matt. iii. 3,) xlv. 23, (compare Rom. xiv. 10, 11,) xlviii. 16; Jer. xxiii. 6, xxxiii. 16; Ezek. i. 26, viii. 3; Dan. iv. 17, et seq. ix. 19, x. 5; Zech. iii. 8, xi. 12, 13, xii. 4, 10, xiii. 7; Hab. iii. 3; Mal. iii. 1. Not all of these have equal force, and some of them may, perhaps, be deemed irrelevant; but they reflect mutual light upon each other by comparison, for some of them are very strong; and, when taken in conjunction with the three preceding arguments, they afford a testimony to a Plurality so clear and convincing, that it is strange how any candid mind can resist it; particularly since it is corroborated by the circumstance of the ancient Jewish belief in a Trinity, which belief was deduced from their own Scriptures; and since this mode of argumentation is sanctioned by our Saviour and his Apostles.

Among the intimations of a Plurality contained in the Old Testament, the eighth chapter of Proverbs is eminently distinguished for a bold and animated delineation of the Second Person in the ever-blessed Trinity. In the annexed Notes and Illustrations, it is shown at large, that this portion of the book, critically explained, can refer to no other than the divine and hypostatic Word; that the same characters, and often in the same words, are ascribed to him in other parts of Scripture; and that the ancient Jewish and Christian churches unanimously concurred in applying it to this celestial Personage. An interpretation supported by such an accumulation of evidence as is there produced, even the most prejudiced must consider as entitled to *some* respect: in my judgment it is irresistible; nor do I hesitate to pronounce the eighth chapter of Proverbs an indubitable attestation to the Divinity and Eternal Filiation of the Son of God.

Many orthodox divines, it must be confessed, though they do not deny that some intimations of a Trinity are contained in the Old Testament, are inclined to attribute but little importance to them, in establishing that grand and momentous doctrine. Let it be granted, that the proofs derived from the

New Testament are more decisive, and that the faith of Christians must be founded upon the Christian Scriptures; yet why should we relinquish the evidence of the Old Testament? It cannot be consistent with a pious and devout spirit to sleight the authority of any part of the sacred Oracles: it cannot be safe, certainly is not prudent, to shut our eyes to the rays, however faint, of subsidiary light. If the Hebrew Writings bear testimony to the orthodox doctrines, their voice should be heard with respectful attention, and their evidence should be received with submissive thankfulness. To adopt the language and sentiments of a learned Prelate; “ I am fully persuaded, that we ought to rest our faith *chiefly* on the New Testament. But I am equally convinced, that every passage of the Old Testament, that can, with any colour of reason, be made appear to relate to Christ, ought to be tenaciously maintained by us. Why should we relinquish any evidence of Christian truth, which is not proved, upon strictly critical principles, to be untenable? If we withdraw testimonies as *questionable*, because they are *questioned* by unbelievers, we add nothing to *their* faith, and we lessen, in vain, our own means ‘ of giving an answer to every man, that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us.’ If the testimonies of the Old

Testament had not been of great importance in every thing relative to Christ, our Saviour would not have said, ‘ Search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of me.’ For this was said before the New Testament Scriptures were written, and could apply only to the Old.”*

The Levitical Law, considered in itself, is not a matter of much importance to the professors of Christianity; since, setting aside its relation to the new Coveuant, it can only be considered as the record of a polity which has long ceased to exist. But, taken in connexion with the religion of Christ, it becomes highly useful and important. The great value, indeed, of all the Old Testament Scriptures arises from their intimate relation with the New; in consequence of which circumstance, they bear a full and striking evidence to the doctrines of the Gospel.

In the communication of religious knowledge to man, the Deity has proceeded by a gradual progress, from the first dawn of hope through the promised Seed, vouchsafed to our fallen progenitors; developing

* The Bible and Nothing but the Bible, by the Bishop of St. David's, p. 102.

his will, in successive stages, with still increasing clearness, and always adapting his discoveries to the situation of the people chosen to be the depositories of divine truth, till the Messiah, to whom every revelation pointed, was ushered into the world; and the grand plan of redemption was finished by the rise and diffusion of Christianity.* The Gospel, being the completion of the types and figures, the prophecies and the ceremonial ordinances, of the Law, was promulgated in the phraseology borrowed from the ancient Oracles, as the consecrated medium of revelation. Hence arises the close connexion between the Jewish and Christian Scriptures; in so much, that the New Testament is best understood by a comparison with the Old; and the Old Testament is rendered perspicuous by reflective light from the New.

If the Hebrew volume, then, is not studied and applied to the illustration of the Gospel, the Evangelical truths will either be subjected to the torture of Calvinism, or they will appear faded and diminished in the faithless mirror of Socinianism. It is only important, however, as a means conducive to

* Law's Theory of Religion, part 2. Dr. Graves's Lectures on the Pentateuch.

an end, as the best preparative, and the most faithful guide, to a true exposition of the Christian Revelation. This is the object to which every thing else is naturally subordinate; and, as the Old Testament is subservient to this end in so many ways, a critical study of it becomes of particular importance to the stewards of the mysteries of God. “It is, however, to be remembered,” says Bishop Horsley, “that the Writings of the Old Testament are only of a secondary importance, for the evidence which they afford of the truth of our Lord’s pretensions, and for the light which they throw upon the doctrines of the Gospel, which is indeed so great, that an inattention to these more ancient parts of the code of Revelation is likely to be one principal cause of the scepticism which unhappily prevails among our modern sectaries, concerning the original dignity of the Redeemer’s nature, and the expiatory virtue of his sufferings.”*

* Bishop Horsley’s Tracts, p. 2, Dundee, 1812. The relative correspondence between the two Covenants was well understood by the ancient Fathers, who, in illustrating the Doctrines of the Gospel, continually appeal to the Old Testament: *η γαρ εις Χριστον πιστις, και η του Ευαγγελιου γνωσις, εξηγησις εστι και του νομου πληρωσις.* —(Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. 4, p. 528, B. Paris, 1629.) The author of the Quæst. et Respons. ad Orthodox. among the works of Justin Martyr, observes: *τι γαρ εστιν ο νομος; ευαγγελιον*

This leads me to the consideration of the means of interpreting the book of Proverbs, and of the helps which the assiduity of the learned has supplied for a full development of its meaning. This, therefore, shall be the subject of the next section.

SECTION II.

WHATEVER rank the Proverbs may be supposed to hold in the scale of elegance and poetry, and however valuable may be their stores of preceptive wisdom, the progress of the interpreter is not free and unobstructed: he marches not in an open path, or over a smooth and enamelled lawn; he has intricate thickets to penetrate, lofty mountains to scale, and abrupt precipices to surmount. Some difficulties must be encountered arising from the very nature of parabolic composition. In some instances, the sentiment is intentionally involved in dark and ænig-

προκατηγγελημενον. τι ἔε το εὐαγγελιον; νομος πεπληρωμενος.— (P. 457, Colon. 1686.) So Eusebius, *Demons. Evang. lib. i. cap. 4 and 7*; indeed, the whole work may be considered as demonstrating this truth. Jerom in *Gal. v.*; *Ephes. iii.* Many excellent observations on this subject may be found in *Dr. Daubeny's Eight Sermons on the Connection between the Old and New Testament*, and *Faber's Horæ Mosaicae*, lib. ii. § 1, et seq.

matical expressions, or in remote imagery and symbolical language, which must necessarily often be obscure to those who live in a distant age, and are habituated to totally different manners, customs, and opinions. Allusions and images, which were not only perspicuous, but beautiful and expressive, to those for whose instruction they were immediately designed, are either lost upon modern readers, or are beheld in a dim and confused manner through the intervening distance.

This impediment, however, from its infrequent occurrence, presents no formidable difficulty to the commentator; since, if he cannot surmount it, he may be content to fail where his predecessors in the same attempt have failed, and where the obstacle may, perhaps, be insurmountable. But a more common obstruction arises from that which forms the first excellence of the proverb, its brief and condensed language. The brevity essential to it is often attended with obscurity; and the celebrated author of the Hebrew Prælections endeavours, with his usual elegance, but not with his usual success, to defend it as a beauty.* With respect to those aphorisms which

* “ Porro Brevitatem plerumque consequitur aliqua Obscuritas; quam non modo non reformidat Parabola, sed amat etiam, et aucu-

were originally designed to be "dark sayings," his observations may be admitted; but in all the rest, and in every other species of composition, with the exception, perhaps, of the prophetic, obscurity is a blemish; and, probably, none presented itself to the contemporaries of Solomon. One cause of obscurity, however, in the Proverbs, is, the extreme conciseness of expression, in consequence of which it is sometimes a difficult task, amid the different senses that most words will bear, to ascertain the genuine meaning of the author.

A still greater difficulty, in the interpretation of the book, arises from the want of connexion between the proverbs themselves. A large portion of the work consists of separate and detached sentences, having no relation to each other, and strung together without coherence or mutual dependence. That this must occasion ambiguity cannot be doubted, when it is considered how much the connexion or continuity

patur, et sibi laudi ducit. Habet enim ea quoque res suam utilitatem: acuit animum, et intentum reddit; excitat studium et desiderium sciendi; in ipsa disquisitione vires ingenii stimulat et exercet: ad hæc, vult mens humana in percipienda veritate suas sibi partes relinquere; non omnia plane nimis et aperte exponi, sed aliquid suæ perspicacitati tribui; &c."—*De Sac. Poes. Præl.* xxiv. p. 315. See Bauer, *Hermeneut. Sacra*, § 93, p. 395.

of discourse contributes to perspicuity; since an expression, very ambiguous in itself, may become sufficiently clear by the aid of the context. It is by this circumstance that the meaning of words, possessed of the most extensive signification, is limited and defined. In the exposition of other works, the scope of each part is a consideration of the highest importance; but as every sentence almost of what are proverbs, in the strict sense of the word, forms a complete and independent proposition, if the sense is not clearly ascertainable from the expressions themselves, they rarely become perspicuous by the reflection of contiguous light.

To these causes of obscurity must be added the great number of words occurring only once, or but seldom, which, together with the difficulties inseparable from the Hebrew tongue, create many obstacles, only to be overcome by the cautious examination and patient research of the Biblical student.

Some circumstances, on the other hand, are not wanting by which these impediments are alleviated, if not entirely removed. Certain facilities in the interpretation of this part of the Scriptures arise from the antithetic style employed by the author. Each

aphorism, for the most part, consists of two hemistichs, the latter of which is either put by way of repetition and confirmation, or of opposition to the former. Thus they mutually explain and illustrate each other: an obscure expression in one hemistich often becomes perspicuous by its consentaneousness with, or contrariety to, some one in the other. Not only the obscurities of single words may be elucidated by the parallelism, but it tends likewise to develop the meaning of whole clauses; and thus we are furnished with a clue to guide us through the intricacies in which the book of Proverbs is involved. It would be useless to accumulate instances, as the following Version and Notes will demonstrate, if I am not much mistaken, the value and importance of this great principle of the parœmiastic style.*

Much assistance, it has been supposed, might be derived from a comparison with the adages or moral sayings still in circulation in the East. "I have

* "Gnomæ Salomonis, quæ, quia concisæ sunt sententiæ et paucis verbis inclusæ, multum obscuritatis et difficultatis habent, potissimum e Parallelismo membrorum illustrandæ sunt."—(Bauer, Hermeneut. Sac. § 93, p. 395.) I regret that I have not been able to procure a work of which Bauer makes mention, entitled "Dissertatio de Parallelismo Membrorum egregio Interpretationis Subsidio," by Schleusner, the author of the celebrated *Lex. in Nov. Test.*

always been of opinion," says a learned commentator, " that the Proverbs of Solomon not only share the common advantage of other books of Scripture, in being capable of receiving light from the Arabic, and the other dialects; but likewise have this peculiar privilege of their own, that, being a collection of wise *apophthegms*, or *moral sayings*, they may admit of an additional illustration from the *Eastern Amthâl*, or *adagies*, which make a great part of the ethical and political wisdom of the Arabians and Persians, and have not only been preserved in their ordinary conversation, but have likewise been gathered into volumes, and illustrated by the commentaries of their learned men."* But with what truth can it be asserted, that Bible precepts may be elucidated by aphorisms comparatively modern, and circulating among a rude people, never distinguished for ethical or political science? Can the dictates of infallible inspiration receive light or force from the sayings of fallible men; of men who have ever been characterized by the aberrations of intellect, and the wildness of Oriental imagination? The success has been answerable to such a chimerical project; and

* Dr. Hunt's *Observations on several Passages in the Book of Proverbs*, p. 6, Oxon. 1175.

the most profound scholars have pored over the tomes of Arabian and Persian lore, without gathering fruits sufficient to remunerate their toil. Many parallel passages have been produced, and abundance of others might, without any extraordinary effort, be collected; they may serve to display a knowledge of Oriental learning, and may amuse in the perusal, like resembling passages from the Greek and Roman writers; but to propose them as explanatory of the scriptural proverbs, is to insult the understanding of the reader. The comparison itself presupposes a knowledge of the meaning; for that must be discovered *before* their affinity can be determined. After an examination of the most celebrated commentators on the Proverbs, I have not met with any important illustration, derived from the Eastern Amthál.

Though the proverbial sayings of the East may be little serviceable to the commentator, yet the language of Arabia, we are told, is the great storehouse from whence materials may be extracted to repair the wreck which the Hebrew tongue has suffered through the lapse of time. In the opinion of Reiske, the Arabic Lexicographer, Al Jauhari, has alone thrown more light upon the sacred volume than the

whole Synagogue;* and Bauer pronounces it to be the unanimous suffrage of critics at the present day, that Hebrew can only be illustrated by the Arabic and Aramæan dialects.† Almost every work on Biblical criticism which has issued, of late, from the prolific press of Germany abounds with encomiastic strains upon the utility of Arabic. On this subject Continental genius blazes with unwonted splendour; the young adventurous critic fancies he beholds the star in the East, to conduct him to the discovery of the sacred treasure; and the hoary linguist triumphs at the new light which theology has received from “Araby the blest.”

Bochart, Pococke, Schultens, Schroeder, Michælis, Rosenmuller, Reiske, Schulz, Eichhorn, and other

* “*Ultro largimur, claram et puram lucem inde unice peti, et unum al Gjeuharium sacro codici V. T. plus quam totam Synagogam prodesset.*”—*Oratio de Studio Ling. Arab.* p. 224.

† “*Hodie omnes consentiunt, hebraicam linguam non nisi ex arabica et aramæa lucem foenerari, &c.*”—*Hermenent. Sac.* § 19, p. 100. See also Schroeder, *Præf. ad Observat. ad Orig. Heb.* 4to. Groning. 1761. Kromayer, *de Usu Ling. Arab.* lib. i. Francof. 1707. Hunt, *Oratio de Antiquitate Ling. Arab.* p. 48, et seq. Oxon. 1739, and *de Usu Dial. Orient.* Oxon. 1748. Aurivillii *Diss. ad Sac. Lit. pertinentes*, Diss. 1, ed. Michælis, Goetting. 1790. Jahn, *Introductio ad Lib. Sac.* § 73, et seq. Viennæ, 1814. Every thing that can be said in favour of Arabic has been done by Schultens in his different works, particularly in his *Origines Hebrææ*.

modern critics, have diligently explored the wide-extended fields of Arabic literature; yet it may, *perhaps*, be questioned, whether the ability, erudition, and industry of these scholars have diffused, from that source, much light upon the obscurities of the Hebrew language. In tracing them to their sources, I have often, not to say generally, found, that the aid of Arabic has been solicited for the illustration of words which might be far better explained from “the pure wells of Hebrew undefiled;” and that in other words, where its assistance was most wanted, it has shed a glimmering and precarious ray.

Such an assertion, in direct contradiction to so many learned theological writers, is not made without considerable hesitation; nor ought it to be ventured without stating the grounds upon which it is founded. I shall, therefore, proceed to lay before the reader the reflections which have led to this result; not only because it is of the utmost importance to come to a decided conclusion upon the subject, but because they have had great influence upon the following Version and Notes.

In the first place, it may be laid down as an incontrovertible position, that recourse need never be had

to the kindred languages, when the meaning of a word can be *satisfactorily* established by its application in the original Scriptures. In such cases their assistance is not wanted; their evidence can add nothing to an authority already full and complete.*

But, secondly, in Hebrew words occurring only once, or but seldom, and whose signification cannot be accurately determined by Biblical usage, it is certainly allowable to invite the aid of the Oriental dialects; in as much as it is always right and expedient to collect all the evidence the case admits, before a decision is made. This is equally incontrovertible with the former position; but the question is, to what extent their assistance goes, and what dependence can be placed upon it. This point, then, shall be first examined with respect to the Arabic tongue.

The argument on which an appeal to the Arabic for illustrating the Hebrew depends may be syllogistically expressed in the following manner. Hebrew and Arabic are sister dialects; a root in the latter

* Kromayer, de Usu Ling. Arab. lib. i. cap. 4, § 8. Le Clerc, Proleg. in Pent. Diss. 2, § 10. Bauer, Hermeneut. Sac. § 23, p. 132.

language has such a particular meaning; therefore the same root in Hebrew has a similar meaning. This argument obviously rests upon the assumption, that, as the one dialect has sprung from the other, or both from one common source, they have such an analogy that similar words may be supposed to retain similar meanings. But the basis of this reasoning will be overthrown, if it can be proved, that both these dialects, or either of them, have undergone a considerable variation: for it will appear, either that they do *not* retain that strong and general resemblance, upon the assumption of which an application to the sister dialects is founded, or that it is of too *dubious* a nature to form a safe medium of illustration.

Many eminent Orientalists have asserted the unvaried purity of Arabic from the Confusion of Languages to the Hejra, a period of nearly three thousand years; nay, that it has even continued to our own times without any internal variation.* These assertions are extravagantly hyperbolical, since they

* Walton's Prolegom. c. 14, § 2. Schultens, Origines Hebrææ, lib. i. par. 1, § 44, p. 13, and par. 2, cap. 4, § 23, p. 241, Lug. Bat. 1761. Robertson's Diss. de Ling. Arab. p. 18—29, prefixed to his Clavis Pentateuchi. Auriwillii Diss. ad Sac. Lit. pertinentes, p. 16.

attribute unchangeableness to what is most changeable, and decide concerning the state of a language above two thousand years previous to any existing records.

It appears, from unexceptionable evidence, that, from the time of the Arabian Impostor to the present day, Arabic has undergone a great change. Foreign notions have been imported, and new ideas multiplied through the ascendancy of the Mohammedan arms and religion; in consequence of which an immense number of words have acquired new, and many even opposite, senses. After the pretended Prophet had kindled the enthusiasm which, in a few years, erected an empire unrivalled for grandeur and extent, the Saracens were continually in a feverish delirium; and, phrensied with their new faith, were incessantly occupied with contention among themselves, or in the splendid enterprises of foreign conquest. Such a situation was but little favourable to the permanency of the language; and accordingly it underwent so great a change, that the dialect of the Koran has become almost a dead language, and is taught, even at Mecca, as Latin is at Rome. This we learn from Niebuhr, an acute

and intelligent traveller, whose authority is decisive of the fact.*

Many circumstances concurred subsequently to the Hejra to precipitate this change; yet we may reasonably infer, that it suffered a considerable variation during the space of about a thousand years, which intervened between the latest of the Hebrew prophets and the Mohammedan æra. Whatever care the Arabians may have taken to guard the purity of their language, and how much soever may be attributed to the permanency of Oriental customs and habits, it was totally impossible to preserve their native tongue entirely pure and unchanged. Mutability and decay are the invariable attendants upon every thing earthly; nor is it in the power of man to confer durability upon the fluctuating nature of human speech.

That it had changed, and changed materially, may be inferred from the many different dialects which prevailed at the age of Mohammed;† for they

* Travels, sect. 27, cap. 1.

† Walton's Prolegom. c. 14, § 3. Pococke, Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 155, Oxon. 1806. Sale's Prel. Disc. to the Koran, § 1, p. 33, Lond. 1812. Richardson's Dissertation on the Language, &c. of Eastern Nations, p. 5, Oxon. 1778. White's Bampton Lectures, p. 26 of the Notes, Lond. 1811.

could not have existed, had it continued with unvaried purity to the time of that impostor. A number of coexistent dialects necessarily implies a variation from the language in its aboriginal state.

The same inference may be deduced from its boasted copiousness. Arabic abounds in synonyms, or various appellations of one single thing, to an extent unexampled in other languages. As for instance; it has five hundred names for a lion, two hundred for a serpent, eighty for honey, and above a thousand for a sword.* Parkhurst's remark upon this fact is correct and important: "It may be safely left to the determination of any considerate man, who is at all acquainted with the nature of language, whether this could possibly be the case in any *one* dialect or language upon earth; or whether it is possible to imagine a stronger internal proof, that a language answering this character must, in fact, be made up of several various languages or dialects."† If Arabic be so compounded, we are warranted to conclude that it *must* have varied, in a great degree,

* Walton's Prolegom. c. 14, § 6. Kromayer, de Usu Ling. Arab. l. i. c. 1, § 8. Pococke, Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 158.

† Preface to Hebrew Lexicon.

from its original state. All these circumstances are of sufficient weight to overthrow the extraordinary assertions of the Arabizing critics as to the unvaried purity of the language of Arabia.

But, however it may be accounted for, a great difference does actually at present exist between Hebrew and Arabic. Schultens even does not deny it, though he attempts to evade the force of the objection, by attributing much of this discrepancy to the fault of lexicographers in not rightly establishing the primary meaning, and to the metaphorical and secondary senses, which, however various, when traced to their source are found to harmonize.* But the difference above stated, make what abatements you please, is a fact, confirmed by the most satisfactory evidence. Let any one examine a number of roots in Schindler or Castell, and he must be immediately convinced, that the same words in the two languages not only very often diverge, but not unfrequently exhibit totally opposite senses.† Nor

* Origines Hebrææ, par. 2, cap. 6, § 7, p. 269.

† In comparing a root in the kindred languages, care is to be taken to distinguish the literal metathesis which it may have undergone. This subject is treated by Kromayer, de Usu Ling. Arab. lib. i. c. 1, § 6; Bauer, Hermeneut. § 23, p. 123; but most fully by Schultens, Clavis Dialect. cap. 1.

is this difference limited to a small number of words; it prevails to such an extent, that I cannot but doubt whether the examples of variation, if compared with those in which they coincide, would not greatly preponderate. In syntax and idiom, likewise, they, in many instances, widely vary; though the profoundly learned Albert Schultens was so deeply impressed with the notion of a grammatical analogy between Hebrew and Arabic, that he endeavoured to improve our grammatical knowledge of the sacred language by the aid of the Arabic grammar, in which he has been followed by Schroeder, Robertson, and other Hebraists. A general relationship between the two languages is acknowledged; but, in the signification of very many similar words, in the number and variety of conjugations, in the dual of verbs, in the use of the article, and in the declension of nouns, the Arabic differs widely from the Hebrew.

These observations may be illustrated by an example. You affix a particular meaning to a Hebrew word, and for proof appeal to the same root in Arabic. But it is clear, that many words in the two languages have varied from each other; I, therefore, require a proof that this is not the case with the words in question. If they have varied from their primitive

similarity, they cannot possibly illustrate each other; but whether they have or have not, is a point utterly impossible to be determined; for, as no records of the Arabic language, coeval with the Jewish writers, exist, there is no medium of proof to show either their identity or discrepancy. The conclusion is unavoidable, that a sense attributed to a Hebrew word from the Arabic must be very doubtful and uncertain.

The advocates of Arabian learning are aware, that this inference can no otherwise be evaded than by denying the premises; and they have, accordingly, strenuously exerted themselves in maintaining the close affinity of the two dialects.* But their efforts are in vain: Hebrew and Arabic do often vary from each other, as well in grammatical inflection as in the signification of similar roots: this is a fact that may be disguised, that may be denied, but cannot be refuted; it meets the student at every step he advances in his researches into the Oriental tongues. Now the difference actually subsisting between them, though opinions may be divided as to its extent, is,

* Sebultens, *Origines Hebrææ*, par. 2, c. 5, § 7, p. 258, and c. 6, § 2, p. 266. Arivillius, *Diss. ad Sac. Lit. pertinentes*, p. 11, et seq. Hunt, *de Antiquitate Ling. Arab.* p. 48, 52. Robertson, *de Ling. Arab.* p. 42, 49, 54, et seq.

at least, of sufficient magnitude to disprove the existence of that intimate analogy and resemblance, upon the assumption of which an appeal to Arabic is founded.

Enough has been said, in my apprehension, to evince, that the Arabic language constitutes a very dubious source of Hebrew criticism; but other reasons afford a collateral proof, that it is a fallacious guide in elucidating the sacred Oracles. And,

First: Our knowledge of Arabic is derived from sources too modern to diffuse a steady light upon the Hebrew tongue. It is very doubtful whether any Arabic writings are *much* older than the time of Mohammed. A very high antiquity is claimed by Schultens for some specimens which he has published; but our great Orientalist, Sir William Jones, suspects them “to be modern compositions on the instability of human greatness, and the consequences of irreligion, illustrated by the example of the Hinyarick princes.”* Among the most ancient

* Schultens, *Monumenta Vetustiora Arabiæ*, Lug. Bat. 1740. Sir William Jones's *Discourse on the Arabs*, Works, vol. i. p. 44, Lond. 1799, 4to.

Arabic monuments are Seven Poems, which were transcribed upon Egyptian paper, and hung up in the temple of Mecca, thence called *Al Modhahabât*, or Golden, and *Al Moallacât*, or Suspended; yet they were, undoubtedly, written about the beginning of the seventh century. There is also a miscellaneous collection of epigrams, odes, and elegies, called the *Hamasa*, made in the second century of the *Hejra*, and containing such poems as were then thought most ancient; though, probably, most of them, if not all, subsequent to Mohammed. A work is still extant, entitled the *Amthâl*, or Apologues of *Lokman*, who, according to some Arabian writers, was contemporary with David, though he has generally been thought to have been the same person with the *Æsop* of the Greeks, on account of the great similarity in the circumstances and fables attributed to each.* Their respective histories have so much the air of a romance, that no dependence can be placed upon the genuineness of the works which go under their names; and, indeed, the fables themselves have too striking a resemblance to be

* Hottinger, *Hist. Orient.* lib. i. cap. 3, p. 68. D'Herbelot, *Bibliothèque Orientale*, voc. *Lokman*. Sale's Note to the 31st cap. of the *Koran*, vol. ii. p. 252. General Dictionary, Art. *Lokman*.

accounted for otherwise than by a common origin.* In short, the remark of Sir William Jones appears correct, that "few monuments of antiquity are preserved in Arabia, and of these few the best accounts are very uncertain."†

The loss of the ancient Arabian compositions was the inevitable consequence of the situation and circumstances of the Saracenic tribes. The art of writing, though known, perhaps, in Arabia much earlier, was certainly very little practised before the Mohammedan æra;‡ the productions, therefore, of the older poets could only have been conveyed by oral recitation; but it is surely impossible for either numerous or extensive works to be long preserved by the

* "On trouve dans les Paraboles, Proverbes ou Apologues de Locman en Arabe, des choses que nous lisons dans les Fables d'Esopé, en sorte qu'il seroit assez mal-aise de décider, si les Arabes les ont empruntées des Grecs, ou si les Grecs les ont prises des Arabes. Il est cependant certain, que cette manière d'instruire par les fables, est plus conforme au génie des Orientaux, qu'à celui des peuples de l'Occident."—(D'Herbelot, *ibid.*) Whenever Lokman may have lived, the Fables which bear his name have every appearance of being a modern compilation.

† Discourse on the Arabs, Works, vol. i. p. 43.

‡ Job, xix. 23, 24. Pococke, Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 159, 161, and Orat. at Carmen Togræi. Sale's Prel. Disc. p. 34. Prideaux's Life of Mahomet, p. 26, Lond. 1808. Robertson, de Ling. Arab. p. 29, et seq. Hunt, de Antiquitate Ling. Arab. p. 11.

unassisted aid of human memory. Astonishing examples, it is true, are recorded of the power of memory; and some have thought it equal to the retention of the Iliad and Odyssey, or the Poems of Ossian.* “A credulity eager for wonders” may acquiesce in these representations; but such a prodigious force of reminiscence, if ever possessed, must have been extremely rare. A succession of persons so highly gifted would be little less than miraculous; and, therefore, neither many nor extensive compositions can, in *any* unwritten speech, be long transmitted from one generation to another. But, if even this were possible among a people so enthusiastically devoted to poetry as the Arabians, yet they must, for the most part, have perished amidst the universal convulsion which followed the establishment of the Mohammedan religion. The wild fanaticism, and the insatiable thirst for conquest, occasioned by the rise of Mohammedism, superseded all other cares; learning and the arts of peace were neglected; and it was not till the empire of the Caliphs began to

* Cicero, Tuscul. Disput. lib. i. § 24. Quintilian, Instit. Orat. lib. xi. § 2. Xenophon, Sympos. cap. 3, § 5. Wolfii Prolegom. ad Homerum, § 24. The modern origin of the Poems of Ossian is proved, with unanswerable force of argument, by Mr. Laing, Diss. at the end of his History of Scotland.

repose from its victories, and to enjoy some degree of tranquillity, that the Arabians returned to the pursuit of literature, and the cultivation of their language.*

In confirmation of this statement it may be observed, that our Arabic Lexicons are mainly extracted from Al Jauhari and Al Firauzabadi, the former of whom lived in the tenth century, and the latter in the fourteenth. Schultens, however, affirms that these lexicographers appeal to authors *much older* than Mohammed.† The preceding observations, I think, clearly prove, that this statement is greatly exaggerated; but, allowing it to be true to a certain extent, the assertion amounts to little, unless it can be distinctly ascertained, that these authors were considerably more ancient; as one, two, or even three centuries would still leave

* “Atque hinc est quod tot veterum poetarum carmina, quæ non aliis antea, quam fidei hominum memoriis, apothecis servarentur, perierint.”—(Pococke, Specimen, &c. p. 165.) In this he has been followed, as usual, by Sale, Prel. Disc. p. 37, and by Hunt, de Ant. Ling. Arab. p. 18.

† “Non hauriunt Arabum Lexicographi Linguæ notitiam ex solo Alcorano, et Auctoribus qui Muhammedi æquales, vel posteriores; sed ex fontibus multo vestustioribus, &c.”—Origines Hebrææ, par. 2, cap. 6, § 17, p. 278.

a very great interval between them and Malachi, the latest of the Hebrew prophets. We have, unquestionably, no Arabic prose composition before the Koran; and should it be granted, that we possess a few poems and fragments a century or two more ancient; yet, even in that case, the oldest Arabic writings extant are eight or nine hundred years subsequent to the latest productions of the Hebrew volume. All the remains, moreover, that have ever been considered ancient are but few in number; and to form an adequate conception of the extent and copiousness of the Arabic tongue, we must have recourse to the Koran and later works. What authority, then, can be attributed to a dialect, of which our knowledge is drawn from sources comparatively modern? Had we compositions in it coeval, or but little posterior to those of the inspired writers of the Old Testament, we might appeal to it with less hesitation; but Arabic is only known to us in its comparatively modern state, after it had undergone a great change, as we have every reason to believe, in the long period it continued the unwritten dialect of the semi-barbarous hordes of the Arabian Peninsula.

Secondly: This uncertainty is much increased by the circumstance, that a Hebrew word may

sometimes be referred to different Arabic roots. The most learned philologists, in appealing to the Arabic, are by no means unanimous in that appeal. This not only happens in words compounded with one or more of the quiescent letters, Aleph, He, Vau, Jod, wherein it must naturally be expected; but in those which have no such letter in their composition. Hence arises a diversity of interpretation of the same word, according as its signification is derived from different Arabic roots. In this case, what shall determine our choice? It is in vain to apply etymological rules, for a Hebrew word often bears an equal affinity to different Arabic words; and if grammatical analogy fail us, what other rule for the selection is to be substituted, which will not be equally precarious?*

Thirdly: Even when no doubt can be entertained of the affinity, or rather identity, of a Hebrew and Arabic root, much uncertainty arises from the various, and often contrary, senses in which the same

* I had originally intended to have illustrated these remarks with examples, a multitude of which I have collected in the course of my reading; but, as their insertion would swell this Dissertation to a much greater length, and as these observations are general, I have deemed it proper to omit them.

Arabic words are received. The Arabic is a language, not only copious beyond any known tongue, but likewise unequalled for the multiplicity of senses, and sometimes opposite ones, annexed to the same words. In attempting to illustrate the Hebrew from this language, which out of the many senses is to be adopted? And what is to constitute our guide in the selection? This, say the patrons of Arabic, may be determined by an attentive examination of the context.* But the context is a very fallible guide, since it not unfrequently happens, that more than one sense will apply to the passage where the Hebrew word occurs. Besides, to lay it down as a canon, that such are to be chosen as suit the context, is to establish a criterion quite independent of the Oriental dialects, and which renders them, in a great measure, useless: for if a Hebrew word can be explained by the context, foreign aid is unnecessary; if it cannot, by what shall we be guided in applying for illustration to the numerous, and often discordant, senses of Arabic words? If we are determined in the choice by reasons independent of the language, we

* Kromayer, de Usu Ling. Arab. lib. i. cap. 4, § 3 and § 10. Jahn, Introductio ad Lib. Sac. § 76, p. 87, Viennæ, 1814. Other means are tried to lessen the objection above stated, by Schultens, Origines Heb. par. 2, cap. 6, § 9, p. 270, and Aurivillius, Diss. 1, § 12, p. 24.

make Arabic bend to our interpretation, not our interpretation to the Arabic. In fact, instead of finding in it a monitor and instructor, whose decisions are authoritative, we make it a servile instrument, and forcibly drag it forwards to support our opinions, which are formed upon other grounds, and established by other evidence.

Till some certain rules are discovered for determining our choice among the various senses in which Arabic words are generally received, little dependence can be placed upon its assistance in Hebraic criticism. But this, it is to be feared, is a vain expectation. The only observation relative to this point which has arisen from a rather extensive examination of the subject, is, that greater respect is due to the radical or primary meaning of an Arabic word, than to the derivative senses. Whatever may have been the aboriginal language, Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldee, and Arabic have certainly germinated from one common stock, and, consequently, the higher we ascend, the greater will be their similarity. Now this similarity is more likely to be preserved in the primary meaning of words, than in the derivative significations. Words, by long and frequent use, acquire many different senses ; new ideas are attached

to them, such as are sometimes allied to the radical meaning by a very remote analogy; but the primary meaning is not so liable to change. It is, therefore, more probable, that the meaning of Hebrew words is retained in the radical signification of Arabic words, than in the other senses; and hence it may be appealed to with somewhat greater confidence.

Yet, even in this, much doubt will remain. The primary meaning may have diverged from what it at first was;* and that it has often done so is certain, from the frequent difference between the same root in Hebrew and Arabic; but whether any particular word has, or has not, there are no means of ascertaining. When a Hebrew and Arabic word of the same letters, whose signification can be well established, are found to differ, it is plain that one of them, at least, has varied from its original sense; but which of them, is completely uncertain. At any rate, the possibility, not to say probability, of a change renders an appeal, even to the primary meaning, a matter of doubt and uncertainty.

* “*Nam inconstantia loquendi, quæ in omnibus linguis dominatur, facit, ut significationes verborum facile ac sæpe mutantur; in omni lingua non admodum multa sunt verba, quæ primam radicis vim retinent.*”—Ernesti, *Institutio Interpretis N. T.* p. 77, Lips. 1809.

Moreover, the radical meaning of Arabic words is not easily discovered. The rule for making this discovery is thus expressed by the very learned Professor Marsh: "We should endeavour, in the first place, to discover which among the various senses could most easily have given rise to all the rest; for this must have been the primary sense. That which most resembles it, must be the second in order, and so onward."* But, notwithstanding the clearness of the rule, it is most difficult in practice; and it is often a subject of the most arduous inquiry, in what manner the various senses are to be arranged. Our Arabic Lexicons are very defective in this respect; the compilers not having been so careful as they ought, in tracing the genealogy of the senses.†

It must, likewise, be added, that the radical signification of the Arabic, when discovered, is frequently totally inapplicable to the Hebrew context. Whoever will make the experiment will find, that, in a great majority of instances, the sense attributed to the Hebrew word, from the primary meaning of

* Lecture 16, p. 75.

† Schultens, *Origines Hebrææ*, par. 2, cap. 3, § 34, p. 229. Auri-villii Diss. p. 25. Bauer, *Hermeneut.* § 23, p. 121.

the Arabic, will not suit the scope of the passage in the sacred volume. Recourse must then be had to the derivative senses; in the choice of which, however, there appears to be no adequate guide.

From the whole of the preceding reasoning, it may be inferred, that in no case whatever can an explanation of a Hebrew word, derived solely from the Arabic, amount to a *moral certainty*: it can be no more than *probable*, and, for the most part, probable only in a small degree.

If this conclusion be founded in truth, it must be owned, that many profound Oriental scholars, dazzled with their attainments, have attributed a great deal more to Arabic literature than it deserves. Occasionally it may be of service, as “glistening starlight” is useful to the traveller in the absence of brighter luminaries; but it *always* sheds a doubtful, and *sometimes* a pale and malignant, light. Except Arabian learning be applied to the illustration of the inspired writings with watchful circumspection, with a mind capable of weighing philological probabilities, and exempt from a love of novelty and a spirit of innovation, it will certainly be useless, and probably dangerous. A too fond attachment to the language

and literature of Arabia, unless accompanied with a cautious and sound judgment, may lead the theological student to desert the received interpretation of the Hebrew language, and ultimately to subvert the pillars of our faith which rest upon the Jewish Scriptures. By a rash or unskilful application of Arabic, an infinite variety of significations may be attributed to almost every word, and so different a meaning may be extracted from the sacred writings to what they are commonly and justly supposed to bear, as nearly to obtrude a new Bible upon our notice. For proof of this assertion appeal may be made to Reiske's *Conjecturæ in Jobum et Proverbia Salomonis*; a work unexampled for temerity in conjecture, precipitancy in decision, and misapplication of great Arabic learning.* Another example is supplied in the Translation of the book of Job by Mr. Good, who considers the original text as a mixture

* "Nullum fructum ex his conjecturis capere potest Jobi interpres. Tali enim licentia in textum hebræum grassatus est Reiskius, quali ne in depravatissimis quidem Scriptorum Græcorum Romanorumve codicibus uti liceat. Pluribus vocabulis dictionibusque ope linguæ Arabicæ novas plane et inauditas significationes affingit linguæ hebrææ usu plane non consulto. Integros versus luxat, transponit, rejicit, prouti ipsi in mentem venit. Novum Jobum ille nobis obtrudere vult, non codicum aliorumque subsidiorum criticorum ope restitutum, sed ex ingenio refectum."—Rosenmulleri Scholia in Jobum, p. xliii.

of Hebrew and Arabic, and arbitrarily takes it for one or the other, as best suits his purpose, till he has produced a version so different from what has hitherto been deemed the sense of the author, as almost to form an entirely new work. Even the most strenuous advocates of Arabic literature have acknowledged the danger of an unguarded use of it in the explication of the Scriptures, and the necessity of circumspection in drawing from its treasures.*

The philologist may be delighted to discover recondite etymologies, and to trace the resembling features of the sister dialects; but we should remember, that this is a subject of much uncertainty, and though the observations thence arising may be curious, and sometimes useful, they can seldom be delivered for indisputable truth. In short, Arabic is an ally of dubious fidelity, sometimes deluding its friends into intricate mazes and labyrinths; sometimes treacherously deserting them in the hour of danger and difficulty; and not often contributing to a splendid achievement or important victory. A display of Arabic learning may gratify the pride of

* Kromayer, de Usu Ling. Arab. lib. i. cap. 4, § 9. Hunt's Observat. on the Prov. p. 38, note. Bauer, Hermeneut. § 23, p. 119.

erudition; but it is despicable pedantry to have recourse to it, when the meaning of a word is evident from its frequent occurrence or clear application in the sacred text; and its aid should never be solicited, except in cases where other and less erring testimony either vacillates, or entirely deserts us; nor even then can it be considered as affording more than presumptive proof.

The mode of argumentation employed in the preceding pages, in reference to Arabic, may be applied to the other Oriental dialects, the Syriac and Chaldee. It will be sufficient, however, to add one or two observations upon their comparative value and usefulness.

In the first place, the Syriac and Chaldee dialects are of nearer affinity to the Hebrew than Arabic.* The Syrians were the immediate neighbours of the Israelites; a frequent intercourse subsisted between them, particularly after the Jewish government became

* Vitringa, *Observationes Sacræ*, lib. i. cap. 5, § 5. Hottinger observes, “differre ab Hebraismo Chaldaismum, longius recedere Syriasmum, longissime abesse Arabismum.”—(*Introduct. ad Gram. Harmon.*) It is surprising how Schultens could deny this, *Origines Hebrææ*, par. 2, cap. 1, § 13, p. 190.

monarchical, a circumstance which must have had some influence upon the language of each;* and, what is more to the purpose, the Syriac dialect is found, upon comparison, to bear a striking similarity to that of the Hebrews, both in grammatical analogy and in the signification of the words. Chaldee is essentially the same language as Syriac, differing in little but the pronunciation. The influence of the Assyrians in Judæa, the frequency of communication between the two countries, and the residence of several of the sacred writers in Babylonia, contributed to give, in some particulars, an Aramæan cast to their compositions: as for instance, those of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, and others who flourished during or subsequent to the Babylonish captivity. There are several words of a Chaldaic and Syriac form; but, with the exception, perhaps, of the book of Job, no example is to be found of an inflexion or idiom which undoubtedly betrays an Arabic origin. The contrary, indeed, has been maintained;† but, with the exception above stated, I have not discovered a single phrase or verbal infection *peculiarly* Arabic.

* 2 Sam. viii. 6, x. 6, et seq. 2 Kings, v. 2, et seq. xiii. 3, 6.

† Pococke, *Notæ ad Porta Mosis*, p. 151, ed. Twells, Lond. 1740.

There are also recorded specimens of these languages of an earlier date than any yet discovered in the dialect of Arabia. It is evident, from the considerations before adduced, that no Arabic writing extant can claim a *much higher* antiquity than the age of Mohammed; but the Syriac version, probably made in the first century,* the Syriac works of Ephrem, the Philoxenian version, and most of the Targumim, if not all of them, were certainly written previous to the time of that arch-impostor.

But, in the next place, Arabic possesses several advantages over these dialects. It is still a living language, spoken over an extensive portion of the globe; it contains authors in almost every department of literature; it has been investigated by native grammarians and lexicographers; and ample means exist of ascertaining its copiousness, and the signification of the words. Syriac and Chaldee, on the other hand, have suffered greatly by the ruin of time, and, in many cases, are of as doubtful interpretation as any words in the Hebrew language. Much is it to be lamented, that so few works remain in these dialects; that many writings, particularly

* Laurence on the Logos, p. 69.

in Syriac, remain in manuscript, mouldering in public libraries, and lost to the literary world; that critical editions of the valuable monuments, which we do possess are wanting; and that we are yet destitute of complete Concordances to the Syriac version and the Targumim.

These two dialects, however, derive additional value from their great importance to the interpreter of the New Testament. The vernacular language of our Saviour and his Apostles was either Syriac, or a dialect of the closest affinity with it; and hence it is probable, that the Peshito, or old Syriac version, contains many of the very expressions which flowed from his hallowed lips. The Apostles could scarcely avoid introducing into the Greek in which they wrote some idioms of their native language; accordingly not only Syriac words, but Syriac phrases and modes of expression, occur in their writings.* Even in the

* Ernesti, *Inst. Interp. N. T.* par. 1, sect. 2, cap. 3. Gerard's *Institutes of Biblical Criticism*, c. 2, sect. 5. Michælis's *Introduction* by Marsh, cap. 4, sect. 5. "Of all the Oriental languages," says Bishop Marsh, "the Syriac seems to be the most necessary for an interpreter of the New Testament, as being the native language of the sacred writers."—(Note to Michælis's *Introd.* cap. 4, sect. 14.) If it be true, as some writers contend, that Greek, or Hebræo-Greek, was so current in Palestine, that our Lord and his Apostles might have

Epistles of St. Paul, who was a native of Tarsus, in Cilicia, where Greek was the vernacular language, Hebraisms and Syriasms abound, in consequence of his education in the school of Gamaliel, and his long residence at Jerusalem. The Septuagint version, likewise, made for the use of the Egyptian Jews, and written in a dialect which has been appropriately called Hebrew-Greek, contributed not a little to the Hebrew tincture of the New Testament. In fact, the Greek of the Christian Scriptures is so manifestly Hebraic in idiom, in the arrangement of the periods, in the general tone and manner of the style, that it can neither be perfectly understood, nor duly appreciated by him who is ignorant of the Oriental languages.

Lastly, we ought not to depend upon one dialect alone, but all the kindred tongues are to be taken in conjunction in illustrating the Hebrew.* Ludolph generally prefers the *Æthiopic*, and no criticism can satisfy Schultens, which is not built upon his favourite Arabic; yet, as all the dialects are entitled to a

used it when it suited their purpose, the *Aramæan* was certainly the mother tongue, and their Greek must have received a strong tincture from it.—See Butler's *Horæ Biblicæ*, vol. i. p. 23.

* Bauer, *Hermeneut. Sacra*, § 23, p. 119.

voice, they ought all to be consulted. When they coincide, their evidence is undoubtedly of some weight; but when they differ, as often happens, the testimony of the Aramæan dialects, from their greater affinity to Hebrew, and from their having had greater influence upon the later sacred writers, is to be preferred to that of the Arabic.

Upon the whole, we may conclude, from the foregoing discussion, that Arabic affords a very precarious and doubtful aid in Hebrew criticism; that Syriac and Chaldee, when their evidence is unambiguous, deserve somewhat greater regard; but that, even when all the Oriental dialects agree, a sense attributed to a Hebrew word upon their testimony can only be considered *probable*; it never can be *morally certain*; and, in general, it amounts to no more than a *presumption of its truth*.

If the assistance of the sister dialects be so scanty and uncertain, how shall the meaning of obscure and ambiguous words in the Hebrew Scriptures be determined? Unless a satisfactory answer can be given to this momentous question, no exposition of them that can be proposed will satisfy an inquisitive and rational mind. Let us, therefore, briefly review

the sources from which a knowledge of Hebrew is derived.

The first and most important means of ascertaining the meaning of Hebrew words is Biblical Usage; and, where it is indubitable, its evidence is abundantly sufficient. Other testimony may corroborate, but is not absolutely required.

If, however, the meaning cannot be established by an application to the Bible, the next, and of all others the most valuable, source of illustration is the *Traditionary Interpretation of the Jews*. I do not include under this title any of the ancient versions except the *Targumim*. The *Septuagint*, and the versions of *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, and *Theodotion*, may, in one point of view, be considered as a Jewish interpretation; but, since the Jews have so long discarded their authority, I am justified in regarding them as separate and distinct sources. By the *traditionary interpretation*, then, I mean the interpretation preserved in the *Glossaries and Comments of the Rabbins*; which was followed by the first promoters of Hebrew learning among Christians, *Reuchlin*, *Pagnin*, and, above all, the celebrated *John Buxtorf*, who, in *Rabbinical knowledge*, has left all competitors far behind him.

The Masoretic Punctuation, also, may be considered as a part of the traditionary interpretation; and, as it "has been added to the text," as the learned Prideaux remarks, "by the best care of those who best understood the language," it is not to be deserted hastily, or upon light grounds.*

A knowledge of the Hebrew tongue has always been continued among the Jews, handed down by regular tradition. In some instances, undoubtedly, their authority is very suspicious, in consequence of their hostile feeling towards Christianity; but these instances are rare, and, notwithstanding the accusations of the ancient Fathers, and some moderns, it has never been proved, that they have adulterated a single passage. Their profound reverence for the sacred Books and the sacred language would certainly guard them against wilful perversion of either, when their invincible prejudices did not interfere: why, then, should we hesitate to believe that their knowledge of Hebrew has, *in general*, been faithfully preserved? Their attention must have been directed to its cultivation, in every period of their history, from the time it ceased

* Connexions, par. I, lib. v. See Lowth's Prel. Diss. to Isaiah, p. 71, ed. 8vo.

to be a living language. At their return from the Babylonish captivity, and reestablishment in the Holy Land, necessity even would impel them to consult the divine Oracles, the only authentic records both of their religion and civil polity. The natural consequence must have been the cultivation of the language in which they are written; and they had abundant facilities in the study of it, since many survived with whom it was the vernacular language; and the inspired teachers, whom God raised up among them, would, without doubt, promote the knowledge of it, and provide the means of transmitting it to posterity. A deep-rooted attachment to the institutions of their fathers, the rise of contending sects, and the still increasing expectation of the promised Messiah, would be instrumental, by exciting inquiry, to the continuance of it unimpaired to the birth of Christ. After that event, the constant disputes of the Jews with the primitive Christians must have led to an accurate examination of their sacred Books, and the great care they subsequently took to preserve the genuine text and true interpretation of the Scriptures is sufficiently attested by the Masora.

It is clear, then, that the Rabbins, in every age from the Babylonish captivity, have used their best

endeavours to preserve the knowledge of the Hebrew language ; yet it is impossible, in the nature of things, that it should have descended *perfectly* pure and untainted for so long a period ; especially considering the situation of the Jews, broken with the bitterest persecutions that bigotry and despotism could exercise ; exiled from Palestine, to which every Jew still fondly turns his hopes, and dispersed over the face of the globe, and every where treated as the outcasts of society, with contempt, and ignominy, and unrelenting severity. Errors and mistakes were the unavoidable consequence of such a wretched and persecuted state ; the attention must often have been diverted from the cultivation of their language to the contemplation of their sufferings ; the meaning of some words of less frequent use must gradually have been forgotten ; new and foreign ideas must, by their dispersion in foreign lands, have been ingrafted upon others ; and such as had a particular reference to the soil and climate, the animal and vegetable productions of Judæa, would become obscure, and, at length, in many cases, unknown, by long absence from their native country. The truth of these observations is confirmed by the discordance among the Rabbins, by reason of which it is sometimes no easy task to discover what the traditionary interpretation really is.

It may, perhaps, be alleged against the authority of the Jews, that the Rabbins learned both their grammar and the explication of a great many words from the Arabians; and thus their interpretation is not to be considered as wholly traditionary, but as taken, in some measure, from the Arabic language.* Some assistance, it is readily granted, the Rabbins derived from the Arabic as well as from the Aramæan tongues; a circumstance so far from disparaging, rather favours their authority, as it shows their assiduous attention to cultivate and improve a language which they revered as the sacred vehicle of their Laws and Religion. But that they did not make *great* use of Arabic, is evident from a comparison of their explication of Hebrew words with that deduced from the language of the Koran by

* Schultens says, (Origines Heb. par. 2, c. 6, § 25, p. 285,) "Sexcenta indicare possem Themata Hebraica, quæ Rabbinis non aliunde innotuerint, quam usu Arabum, inter quos in Babylonia, Ægypto, Africa, et Hispania versabantur." This assertion cannot be true in its literal extent; for Hebrew, according to Bythner, (Lyra Prophetica, Præf. ad Lect.) contains only 1867 roots; and it cannot for a moment be believed, that the signification of one-third of them could ever have been unknown to the Jews, among whom a knowledge of that language has always been preserved. The Rabbins, however, did occasionally borrow from the Arabic, as those best acquainted with their writings have observed.—Pococke, Orat. ad Carmen Tograi, sub. fin. Bochart, Phaleg. l. i. c. 15. Kromayer, de Usu Ling. Arab. l. i. prælim. § 2. Hunt, de Antiq. Ling. Arab. p. 54.

modern Arabizing lexicographers. The dissonance is too great to allow the supposition of both having drawn from the same sources. That they made so little use of Arabic could not be owing to their ignorance of it, as many of them had daily intercourse with those who spoke that dialect; it must, therefore, have arisen from the circumstance of their not often wanting its assistance.

The assertion, that the Rabbins learned the Hebrew grammar from the Arabians, must likewise be understood with very considerable abatements: * for, if a knowledge of the sacred language has always existed among them, a knowledge of its grammar must also have been preserved. If Buxtorf's *Thesaurus Grammaticus*, which is chiefly taken from Rabbi David Kimchi, be compared with the Arabic grammars of Erpenius or Richardson, it will easily be seen, that the one cannot have been *much* auxiliary to the other. Their difference is too striking to admit of such a supposition. The Jews, in fact, have ever had too exalted an opinion of themselves, and have always viewed other nations

* Simon, *Hist. Crit. du V. T.* lib. i. cap. 30 and 31. Bauer, *Hermeneut. Sac.* § 35, p. 181.

with too supercilious a contempt, to borrow much from any; and they had too profound a veneration for the language, in which they received the Oracles of God, to render foreign assistance, in any great degree, necessary. The Scriptures have always been the object of their devout regard, the fountain of their dearest hopes, and their sweetest consolation in distress and persecution: how, then, can it be believed that they ever would neglect the cultivation of the Hebrew language, to the study of which they have been obligated by every tie that most interests the heart?

Whatever allowances, therefore, are to be made for inveterate prejudice or involuntary error, great deference is due to the traditionary interpretation of the Jews. In discovering this interpretation the commentator of the present age has but little trouble. All that Rabbinical literature can supply for the elucidation of the Hebrew volume has been collected by preceding critics; and it is, perhaps, impossible for the most unwearied industry to add any thing of importance to their labours.

While their merits in the preservation of the language are acknowledged with due praise, much

cannot be said in recommendation of their commentaries, which are often extremely puerile and absurd.* To understand a language is one thing, to expound a work written in it is another: it is very possible for those who are thoroughly acquainted with the former, to be altogether unsuccessful in the latter: and this I take to be principally the case with the Rabbins. They are deeply conversant with the language of the Bible; but their exposition of it is often inept, allegorical, and trifling. Having carefully consulted the Rabbinical Bible of Buxtorf, I am clearly of opinion, that little assistance can thence be derived to the interpreter of the book of Proverbs.

Another valuable collateral aid is supplied by the Polyglott and Hexaplarian versions. When all, or most of them coincide in the same translation, it would surely be very uncritical not to pay great respect to such an authority.† The venerable

* Rosenmulleri *Historia Interpretationis*, par. 5, p. 210, et seq. Lips. 1795—1814. Simon, *Hist. Crit. du V. T.* lib. iii. cap. 5 and 6.

† I know not why Bishop Marsh, in his admirable *Lectures*, (Lect. 14,) when enumerating the sources from which our knowledge of Hebrew is derived, has not mentioned the Hexaplarian versions, nor the traditional interpretation of the Jews.

Septuagint merits the greatest regard, as well on account of its high antiquity, as its general excellence; and a close attention to it will contribute largely to our knowledge of Hebrew. In the Proverbs it is particularly elegant, having, in many places, preserved the terseness and energetic brevity of the original; though in others it departs widely from the Hebrew text. But, of all the ancient versions, the Syriac is the most uniformly faithful and accurate; and, as the language so nearly resembles the Hebrew, its value can scarcely be estimated too high.

It is not easy to determine the degree of credit which is due to the Targum on the Proverbs. Its resemblance to the Syriac version is, in many respects, so great, that it has been the subject of doubt among the learned, whether the one has not been taken from the other:* and Professor Dathe contends that the Targum on Proverbs was taken from the Syriac version, and not immediately from the Hebrew.† To this hypothesis it may be objected,

* “ De ea dubium est eruditis, ntrum ipsa ex versione, quæ in ea extat, Syriaca, an hæc vicissim ex illa sit descripta: adeo altera alteri respondet.”—*Wolfii Bibliotheca Hebræa*, vol. ii. p. 1176.

† *Opuscula*, Diss. 3, p. 106, Lips. 1796.

that it is impossible to conceive the motive for translating the Syriac into Chaldee, which, whoever could read, might with little trouble read the Syriac itself, from the great similarity of the two languages. With a view, however, of determining this question, which is of much interest to the annotator on the Proverbs, I regularly compared them while engaged in the prosecution of this work: I regret my neglect of noting down their variances, and their agreements in peculiar renderings; but my examination led to the conclusion, that, though they sometimes agree even when the Syriac departs from the Hebrew, yet their differences are too numerous to be accounted for on the supposition of the one being taken *immediately* from the other. Nevertheless, their agreement is so frequent and striking, as to afford just grounds for believing, either that the Chaldee Paraphrast had the Syriac before him, and used its assistance, or that one of them has been subsequently corrected by the other.*

The sources, therefore, from which the knowledge of Hebrew has been derived, and by an attention to which it may be improved, are Biblical Usage, Jewish

* Datlii Opuscula, Diss. 3, § 7.

Tradition, the ancient Versions, and the Oriental Dialects. When these are unanimous, their evidence is decisive; the nature of the subject neither admits nor requires other testimony; and every sound judgment must acquiesce in an interpretation so strongly supported. But it frequently happens, that these witnesses disagree: hence arises a difficulty, and a difficulty of the most arduous kind, to determine their respective degrees of credit, and to distinguish on which side the evidence preponderates. The testimony of the ancient versions and that of the kindred dialects often differ, and both are sometimes at issue among themselves. Now, amidst this discordancy, what course should a judicious critic pursue? By what rules shall he estimate their comparative authority? And by what principles shall he be guided in forming a decision?

Now, according to the principles which I have been endeavouring to establish, the first appeal is to the sacred text, and when the meaning of a word can be established by this means, the evidence is perfectly satisfactory. Though other testimony may corroborate, it is not of necessity required. In the failure of deriving satisfaction from that quarter, the next appeal is to the authority of Jewish tradition,

which will be entitled to greater or less credit, according to the degree of support it receives from other witnesses. If it is confirmed by the testimony of all or any of the ancient versions, and by that of all or any of the Oriental dialects, its authority will be proportionably increased; and vice versâ. In some instances, the traditionary sense is so overpowered by the other evidences, as to justify a critic in deserting it: still, however, its voice is always to be heard with respectful attention, and its authority is not to be rejected without strong and sufficient grounds.

It occasionally happens, that the traditionary sense, and a meaning derived from the Arabic, are opposed to each other, without other authorities appearing on either side. In this case, I own, I infinitely prefer Rabbinical authority, to vague and uncertain etymologies. Not that the Rabbins are infallible; not that prejudice has never blinded their eyes, nor error deceived their judgment: but that their evidence is more entitled to credit, be it more or less, than any other that can be produced.

Again; when the ancient versions and sister dialects are opposed to each other, the former merit the preference; for the kindred languages afford, at

best, only a precarious evidence, while the ancient versions, for the most part, speak with a plain and intelligible voice.

If it be impossible to determine accurately the meaning of some Hebrew words, and that such there are must be granted, it furnishes no argument against the general perspicuity of the Jewish Scriptures, and need create no apprehension respecting the certainty of our faith. Such obscure words occur but seldom ; they affect no historic or prophetic truth ; they alter no religious obligation, no rule of moral conduct. The general perspicuity of the Old Testament cannot but be matter of astonishment, when we reflect, that the Bible, and not even the whole of it, is the only book that has descended to us in pure Hebrew ; that no contemporary records exist ; that the language of it has ceased to be spoken for above two thousand years ; and that the Jews, who have always been so much interested in preserving a knowledge of it, and who have cultivated it with so much care since the Babylonish captivity, used no means to perpetuate it while it was yet a living language.

Though it is attended with fewer obscurities than could, antecedently, have been supposed, many, it

must not be dissembled, do exist, and some which cannot, perhaps, be satisfactorily elucidated in the present state of Biblical criticism. In these cases, it is, surely, more consistent with the humility of Christian investigators of truth to acknowledge the obscurity, and to confess our ignorance, than presumptuously to attribute senses from remote and dubious sources; senses which the inspired penmen may never have intended to express. Infinitely less dangerous is it not to reach the full force of the sacred text, than to superadd a meaning of our own. In the one case, we do not ascertain *all* the truth; in the other, we are representing our own opinions for divine, we are promulgating for commandments the doctrines of fallible men.

As the absolute certainty of demonstration cannot be obtained in critical investigations, moral evidence alone is to be expected; and when it is clear and definite, no well-regulated mind can withhold its assent. But it is difficult, and sometimes next to impossible, to discover the nice distinction between doubt and probability; to ascertain the different degrees of the latter; and to define the quantum of evidence necessary to produce rational conviction. On subjects of philology and criticism, some difference of opinion may exist, without any detriment to the

cause of religion and morality: it relates chiefly to particulars of less importance; for the leading articles of faith and rules of duty are repeatedly declared in Scripture with such clearness and precision, and are supported with such a weight of evidence, that they can only be doubted by those who are blinded by prejudice, or tinctured with the scepticism of the age.

SECTION III.

It now remains to submit a short statement of what has been attempted in the following pages.

The translation is, in substance, the same as the one in general use, with such alterations only, as appear to be warranted by a critical interpretation of the original. In the prosecution of the work, I have prescribed it to myself, as an invariable rule, never to depart from the received translation, without evident necessity.* The authorized version is unrivalled for purity of diction and a commanding simplicity of style; it has been familiarized to the people by long and reverential use; and its sublime and simple phraseology would be ill exchanged for the meretri-

* Newcome's Pref. to the Minor Prophets, Rule 11.

cious ornaments of modern composition. But it would betray an undue deference to a mere translation to retain it where it deserts the Hebrew text; it is inconsistent with a sacred regard for truth to support error, and defend mistake; whenever, therefore, it appeared erroneous or obscure, I have given what, in my judgment, is a clearer and more correct translation. With these exceptions, I have adhered to it with the utmost scrupulosity; not attempting to amend what is already good, or to substitute language of my own for that which has been sanctioned by two centuries of admiration and respect.

A love of novelty, a vain search after elegance of style, or an overweening opinion of their talents, have induced many modern translators to alter the received version without apparent necessity. What good can accrue from changing the phraseology, when little or no change is required in the sense? What benefit can arise from substituting equivalent, or nearly equivalent, expressions? Yet even the most learned and celebrated translators are chargeable with such useless innovation; of which a multitude of examples may be found on a cursory examination. Now, what advantage is gained by such a departure from the language of the common translation? While the sense remains the same, no

fancied propriety of arrangement, and no imaginary beauty of style, can justify a change of the phraseology to which the public ear has been familiarized.

In those passages where it has been deemed right to desert the English translators, I have endeavoured to assimilate the version to their style and manner of expression. For this reason, I have retained the third singular of verbs in “eth;” a few expletives, as, “do,” “did;” a few words almost peculiar to the Bible; and some other modes of diction, now but seldom used, though, in my opinion, they give a majestic simplicity and a venerable air of antiquity to the Scripture style. As these are matters of taste, it cannot be expected that all will be of the same mind; but it is certainly much safer to depart too little, than too much, from the received translation, in as much as the reverence for antiquity is less dangerous than the zeal of innovation.

The Notes which accompany the version are partly critical and partly explanatory. The former are designed to ascertain the full meaning of the sacred text, by a philological inquiry into the signification of the Hebrew words and phrases. In the latter, it is attempted to explain the allusions to ancient facts and customs, to embrace such observations as may

serve to illustrate the original, and, occasionally, to present, in a short paraphrase, an exposition of the meaning intended by the *Parœmiast*.

“Notes,” says Dr. Johnson, “are often necessary, but they are necessary evils:” brevity, therefore, should be the constant aim of the annotator, that the evil, which cannot be avoided, may be of the shortest possible duration.* Nothing is more tiresome, than long and laboured commentaries. Malignity itself could scarcely devise a greater punishment, than to be compelled to read, without omissions, the bulky volumes of Dutch and German criticism. Perhaps no one has ever toiled through the prolix commentaries of that profound Orientalist, Albert Schultens, except such as, engaged in similar attempts to this, have considered it a duty to neglect no source of illustration. It is very easy to write long notes: the difficulty lies in compressing much matter in a short space; in omitting what the reader can easily supply; and in touching upon those circumstances alone which bear upon the point in question.

* In rebus porro omnibus tractandis adhibenda est brevis quantum res patitur et perspicuitatis lex. Nam latis illis et nimis enucleatis disputationibus, ut Vitringanis in *Esaïam*, Lampianis in *Joannem*, res obscurantur potius quam illustrantur, ingenia confunduntur, certe fatigantur.—Ernesti, *Inst. Interp.* N. T. p. 167.

A better taste has begun to prevail in Biblical annotation; and, instead of the long and tedious comments, which perplex by their multiplicity, and weary by their amplitude, a shorter, more compact, and withal a more critical illustration is expected. In the Notes I have been studious of brevity, by rejecting every thing not absolutely necessary to ascertain the sense, or vindicate the translation. With this view, I have, in the first place, commonly referred to the grammarians and lexicographers, when I had nothing to add to their illustrations; considering it useless to multiply remarks and authorities which may be supplied by works in the possession of every scholar. Secondly, I have forborne to enumerate the different expositions which have been given by various commentators, except when I hesitated in the choice, or thought that some one, though not so well supported as the one adopted, was, nevertheless, deserving further consideration. I have given what appears to me the true exposition, and have endeavoured to confirm it; but, if the reader is dissatisfied, he must have recourse to other annotators, among whom he will find an astonishing variety of opinions. Thirdly, I have, for the most part, refrained from any endeavour to enforce the aphorisms of the royal Sage, otherwise than by a brief explanation of the meaning.

So important are the truths contained in this book, and so well adapted to the various circumstances and conditions of men, that almost every verse would supply matter for moral reflection or admonitory remark : yet the discussion of such topics seems not to belong to the province of the annotator, but of the preacher and ethical instructor. Some few attempts of this nature the ardour excited by a contemplation of inspired wisdom has produced, which the severe critic may, at least, pardon, if not accept, as some relief to the barrenness of philological research.

Though brevity has been my constant aim, I have not sacrificed to it any thing which appeared to me necessary to illustrate the Proverbs. I pretend not to have cleared every obscurity, or to have elucidated every ambiguity discoverable in the book ; but I have spared no pains in the attempt, by carefully examining the force of the Hebrew phraseology, and by diligently consulting such helps as an extensive critical apparatus can supply. In those instances where my doubts were very great, I have retained the authorized translation, reserving for the note such observations as occurred in examining the passage. In other places, where probability alone is attainable, I have carefully noted the grounds

upon which it is founded; and in no case have I decided without stating the reasons by which the decision was influenced.

This cautious method of investigation may appear tame and insipid to the admirers of daring criticism and ingenious conjecture. But, in the operations of Biblical interpretation, it is scarcely possible to be too cautious. An injudicious exposition leads to error, where error is the most dangerous. It is, therefore, more consistent with the reverence due to the sacred Oracles, and more becoming the humility and diffidence which should belong to the commentator upon the Word of God, to pause and hesitate, than to decide precipitantly, where inspired truth is concerned.

Such is the nature and design of the work now submitted to the public eye; and, whatever may be the sentence of the tribunal before which he ventures to appear, the author will, at least, enjoy the consciousness of having endeavoured well; a consciousness which no malevolence of criticism, no severity of censure, can destroy.

THE

PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.

THE
Proverbs of Solomon.

CHAPTER I.

- 1 **THE** Proverbs of Solomon, the son of David,
king of Israel,
- 2 Respecting the knowledge of wisdom and instruction;
Respecting the understanding of the words of
prudence;
- 3 Respecting the attainment of instruction in wisdom,
In righteousness, and judgment, and equity;
- 4 Respecting the giving to the simple prudence,
To the young man knowledge and discretion.
- 5 The wise will hear, and will increase in learning,
And the prudent will attain unto wise counsels,
- 6 By understanding a proverb, and the interpretation,
The words of the wise, and their dark sayings.
- 7 The fear of Jehovah is the principal part of
knowledge,
But fools despise wisdom and instruction.

- 8 My son, hear the instruction of thy father,
And forsake not the precepts of thy mother ;
- 9 For they will be a graceful wreath to thy head,
And chains about thy neck.
- 10 My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.
- 11 If they say, " Come with us, let us lay wait for
blood,
" Let us lay snares for the innocent in vain ;
- 12 " Let us swallow them up as Hades does the
living,
" And whole as those who go down into the pit.
- 13 " We shall find all kinds of valuable treasure,
" We shall fill our houses with spoil :
- 14 " Cast in thy lot among us ;
" Let us all have one purse."
- 15 My son, walk not thou in their way ;
Refrain thy foot from their path ;
- 16 For their feet run to evil,
And make haste to shed blood.
- 17 Surely in vain the net is spread
In the sight of any bird ;
- 18 But they lay wait for their own blood,
They lay secret snares for their own lives :
- 19 Such are the ways of all who desire unjust
gain ;
It taketh away the life of the owners thereof.
- 20 Wisdom crieth without,
She uttereth her voice in the streets ;
- 21 She proclaimeth in the chief place of concourse,
In the entrance of the gates,
In the city she uttereth her words, *saying*,

- 22 “ How long, ye simple, will ye love simplicity ?
 “ And, ye scorers, delight in scorning ?
 “ And, ye fools, hate knowledge ?
- 23 “ Turn ye at my reproof:
 “ Behold, I will pour out my spirit upon you,
 “ I will make known my words unto you.
- 24 “ Because I called, and ye refused,
 “ I stretched out my hand, and no man regarded,
- 25 “ Because ye rejected all my counsel,
 “ And have not liked my reproof;
- 26 “ I also will laugh at your calamity;
 “ I will mock when your fear cometh;
- 27 “ When your fear cometh as desolation,
 “ And your calamity approacheth as a tempest;
 “ When distress and anguish come upon you.
- 28 “ Then shall they call upon me, but I will not
 answer;
 “ They shall seek me diligently, but shall not
 find me.
- 29 “ Because they hated knowledge,
 “ And did not choose the fear of Jehovah;
- 30 “ They liked not my counsel,
 “ They despised all my reproof:
- 31 “ Therefore shall they eat the fruit of their own
 way,
 “ And shall be sated with their own devices.
- 32 “ For the backsliding of the simple will slay
 them,
 “ And the carelessness of fools will destroy them;
- 33 “ But he that hearkeneth unto me shall dwell
 safely,
 “ And shall be quiet from the fear of evil.”

CHAPTER II.

- 1 MY son, if thou wilt receive my words,
And lay up my commandments with thee ;
- 2 If, by inclining thine ear unto wisdom,
Thou wilt incline thine heart unto understanding ;
- 3 Yea, if thou wilt cry unto understanding,
And lift up thy voice unto prudence ;
- 4 If thou wilt seek her as silver,
And wilt search for her as for hid treasure ;
- 5 Then shalt thou understand the fear of Jehovah,
And shalt find the knowledge of God.
- 6 For Jehovah giveth wisdom ;
Out of his mouth *come* knowledge and understanding.
- 7 He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous ;
He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly,
- 8 By keeping the paths of rectitude :
And he preserveth the way of his saints.
- 9 Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment,
And equity, *yea*, every good path.
- 10 When wisdom entereth thine heart,
And knowledge is pleasant to thy soul,
- 11 Discretion shall watch over thee,
Understanding shall preserve thee ;
- 12 To deliver thee from the way of the wicked,
From every one that speaketh perverse things ;
- 13 Who desert the paths of righteousness,
To walk in the ways of darkness ;

- 14 Who rejoice to do evil,
 And delight in the perverseness of the wicked ;
- 15 Who are perverse in their ways,
 And froward in their paths :
- 16 To deliver thee from the wanton,
 From the harlot who flattereth with her words,
- 17 Who forsaketh the guide of her youth,
 And forgetteth the covenant of her God :
- 18 For her house inclineth unto death,
 And her paths unto the dead.
- 19 None that go unto her return again,
 Neither do they attain the paths of life.
- 20 Therefore walk in the way of the good,
 And keep the paths of the righteous :
- 21 For the upright shall dwell in the land,
 And the perfect shall remain in it ;
- 22 But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth,
 And transgressors shall be rooted out of it.

CHAPTER III.

- 1 MY son, forget not my doctrine,
 And let thy heart observe my precepts ;
- 2 For length of days, even years of life,
 And peace shall they add to thee.
- 3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee ;
 Bind them about thy neck ;
 Write them upon the table of thine heart ;
- 4 And thou shalt find favour and kindness,
 Both in the sight of God and man.
- 5 Trust in Jehovah with all thine heart,
 And confide not in thine own understanding.

- 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him,
And he will direct thy paths.
- 7 Be not wise in thine own eyes ;
Fear Jehovah, and depart from evil ;
- 8 It shall be a healing medicine to thy navel,
And a lotion to thy bones.
- 9 Honour Jehovah with thy substance,
And with the first-fruits of all thy produce ;
- 10 And thy barns shall be filled with plenty,
And thy vats shall overflow with new wine.
- 11 My son, despise not the chastening of Jehovah ;
Neither be weary of his correction :
- 12 For whom Jehovah loveth he correcteth,
And chasteneth the son *in whom* he delighteth.
- 13 Happy is the man that findeth wisdom,
And the man that getteth understanding ;
- 14 For the merchandise of it is better than the
merchandise of silver,
And the produce of it than fine gold.
- 15 She is more precious than gems,
And all the things thou canst desire are not to be
compared unto her.
- 16 Length of days is in her right hand,
And in her left, riches and honour.
- 17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.
- 18 She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her,
And happy is every one that retaineth her.
- 19 Jehovah by wisdom hath founded the earth,
By understanding hath he established the heavens.

- 20 By his knowledge the depths are broken up,
And the clouds drop down the dew.
- 21 My son, let not *these things* depart from thine
eyes;
Keep sound wisdom and discretion.
- 22 And they shall be life unto thy soul,
And an ornament to thy neck.
- 23 Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely,
And thy foot shall not stumble.
- 24 When thou liest down thou shalt not be afraid,
Yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be
sweet.
- 25 Be not afraid of sudden fear;
Nor of the desolation of the wicked, when it
cometh.
- 26 For Jehovah shall be thy confidence,
And shall keep thy foot from being taken.
- 27 Withhold not good from the indigent,
When it is in the power of thine hand to do it.
- 28 Say not unto thy neighbour,
“Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give
thee,”
When thou hast it by thee.
- 29 Devise not evil against thy neighbour,
When he dwelleth in security by thee.
- 30 Contend not with a man without cause;
Surely he will return thee evil.
- 31 Envy thou not the oppressor,
And choose none of his ways;

- 32 For the wicked are an abomination to Jehovah,
But his intercourse is with the righteous.
- 33 The curse of Jehovah is in the house of the wicked ;
But he blesseth the habitation of the just.
- 34 Surely he scorneth the scorners ;
But he giveth grace unto the lowly.
- 35 The wise shall inherit glory ;
But shame shall exalt fools.

CHAPTER IV.

- 1 HEAR, ye children, the instruction of a father,
And attend to know understanding.
- 2 Because I give you good doctrine,
Forsake not my precepts.
- 3 For I was a son very dear to my father,
And well beloved in the sight of my mother.
- 4 He taught me also, and said unto me,
“ Let thine heart retain my words ;
“ Keep my commandments, and thou shalt live.”
- 5 Get wisdom, get understanding ;
Forget not this ; and decline not from the words
of my mouth.
- 6 Forsake her not, and she will preserve thee ;
Love her, and she will guard thee.
- 7 Wisdom is the principal thing ; *therefore* get
wisdom ;
Even with all thy possessions purchase wisdom.
- 8 Esteem her, and she will exalt thee ;
She will bring thee to honour when thou dost
embrace her.

- 9 She will give to thy head a graceful wreath ;
A glorious crown will she deliver to thee.
- 10 Hear, my son, and receive my sayings,
And the years of thy life shall be many.
- 11 I teach thee in the way of wisdom ;
I lead thee in the right paths.
- 12 When thou goest thy steps shall not be straitened ;
And when thou runnest thou shalt not stumble.
- 13 Take fast hold of instruction ; let *her* not go ;
Keep her ; for she is thy life.
- 14 Enter not into the path of the wicked,
And go not in the way of the base.
- 15 Avoid it, proceed not in it ;
Turn from it, and pass away.
- 16 For they sleep not, except they have done mischief,
And their sleep is taken away unless they cause
some to fall.
- 17 For they eat the bread of wickedness,
And drink the wine of violence.
- 18 But the path of the righteous is as the light of
the dawn,
Which shineth more and more until perfect day.
- 19 The way of the wicked is as thick darkness ;
They discern not that at which they stumble.
- 20 My son, attend to my words ;
Incline thine ear unto my sayings.
- 21 Let them not depart from thine eyes ;
Keep them in the midst of thine heart :
- 22 For they are life unto those that find them,
And a healing medicine to all their flesh.

- 23 Guard thy heart with all diligence;
For out of it are the issues of life.
- 24 Put away from thee a depraved mouth,
And perverse lips remove far from thee.
- 25 Let thine eyes be fixed on that which is right;
And let thine eyelids direct *the way* before thee.
- 26 Ponder well the path of thy feet,
And all thy ways shall be established.
- 27 Turn not to the right hand, nor to the left;
Remove thy feet from evil.

CHAPTER V.

- 1 MY son, attend unto my wisdom;
Incline thine ear to my understanding;
- 2 That thou mayst preserve discretion,
And that thy lips may keep knowledge.
- 3 Although the lips of an harlot distil honey,
And her mouth is smoother than oil;
- 4 Yet in the end she is bitter as wormwood,
Sharp as a twoedged sword.
- 5 Her feet go down to death;
Her steps take hold on Hades.
- 6 Lest she should ponder the way of life,
Her steps are moveable; she regards nothing.
- 7 And now, ye children, hearken unto me,
And depart not from the words of my mouth.
- 8 Remove thy way from her,
And come not nigh the door of her house;
- 9 Lest thou give thine honour unto others,
And thy years to the cruel *harlot* :

- 10 Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth,
And with thy riches in the house of a stranger ;
- 11 And thou mourn at the last,
When thy flesh and thy body are consumed,
- 12 And say, “ How have I hated instruction,
“ And my heart despised reproof ;
- 13 “ And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers,
“ Nor inclined mine ear to my instructors !
- 14 “ I have been in almost all evil,
“ In the midst of the congregation and assembly.”

- 15 Drink waters out of thine own cistern,
And streams out of thine own well.
- 16 Then shall thy springs be dispersed abroad,
Even rivers of waters in the streets.
- 17 They shall belong to thee alone,
And not to strangers with thee.
- 18 Let thy fountain be blessed,
And rejoice with the wife of thy youth.
- 19 *Let her be* as the lovely hind and the pleasant roe ;
Let her breasts satisfy thee at all times ;
And be thou ravished always with her love.
- 20 And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a
wanton,
And embrace the bosom of an harlot ?
- 21 For the ways of man are before the eyes of Jehovah,
And he pondereth all his goings.
- 22 His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself,
And he shall be held fast with the cords of his
sins.
- 23 He shall die because he did not mind instruction ;
And in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

CHAPTER VI.

- 1 MY son, if thou become surety for thy neighbour ;
If thou join thy hand with a stranger ;
- 2 Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth,
Thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.
- 3 Do this therefore, my son, that thou mayst be
delivered,
Because thou art come into the hand of thy
neighbour,
Go, hasten, stir up thy friends.
- 4 Give not sleep to thine eyes,
Nor slumber to thine eyelids.
- 5 Deliver thyself as a roe from the toils,
And as a bird from the hand of the fowler.
- 6 Go to the ant, thou sluggard ;
Consider her ways, and be wise :
- 7 Who, though she hath no guide, overseer, or ruler,
- 8 Provideth her meat in the summer,
And gathereth her food in the harvest.
- 9 How long, sluggard, wilt thou repose ?
When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep ?
- 10 *Ever desiring* a little sleep *more*, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep.
- 11 But thy poverty shall come as a traveller,
And thy want as an armed man.
- 12 The worthless person, the wicked man,
Walketh with a perverse mouth.
- 13 He winketh with his eyes,
He speaketh with his feet,
He teacheth with his fingers.

- 14 Perverseness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief;
He continually soweth discord.
- 15 Suddenly, therefore, shall his calamity come,
Suddenly shall he be destroyed without remedy.
- 16 These six things doth Jehovah hate ;
Yea, seven are an abomination unto him :
- 17 A proud look ; a lying tongue ;
And hands that shed innocent blood ;
- 18 A heart that deviseth wicked counsels ;
Feet that are swift in running to evil ;
- 19 A false witness that speaketh lies ;
And him that soweth discord among brethren.
- 20 My son, keep thy father's commandment,
And forsake not the precepts of thy mother.
- 21 Bind them continually upon thine heart ;
Tie them about thy neck.
- 22 When thou goest, they shall lead thee ;
When thou sleepest, they shall keep thee ;
And when thou wakest, they shall talk with thee.
- 23 For the commandment is a lamp, and the pre-
cept a light ;
And the reproofs of instruction are the way of
life :
- 24 To keep thee from the evil woman,
From the flattery of the harlot's tongue.
- 25 Desire not her beauty in thine heart,
Neither let her beguile thee with her eyes.
- 26 For by means of a lewd woman *a man is brought*
to a piece of bread ;
And the adulteress layeth snares for the precious
life.

- 27 Can a man take fire in his bosom,
And his clothes not be burnt ?
- 28 Can a man walk upon hot coals,
And his feet not be burnt ?
- 29 So it is with him that goeth in to his neighbour's
wife ;
Whosoever toucheth her shall not be unpunished.
- 30 Men do not disregard a thief when he steals,
Even to satisfy his appetite when he is hungry :
- 31 But when discovered, he shall restore seven-
fold,
He shall give all the substance of his house.
- 32 He that committeth adultery with a woman is
void of understanding ;
He that doeth it destroyeth his own life.
- 33 Hurt and dishonour shall he receive,
And his disgrace shall not be wiped away.
- 34 When jealousy *inflames* the rage of man,
He will not spare in the day of vengeance.
- 35 He will not accept any ransom,
Nor rest content though thou multiply thy gifts.

CHAPTER VII.

- 1 MY son, keep my words,
And lay up my commandments with thee.
- 2 Keep my commandments, and thou shalt live ;
And my doctrine as the apple of thine eye.
- 3 Bind them upon thy fingers,
Write them upon the table of thine heart.
- 4 Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister,
And call understanding *thy* kinswoman ;

- 5 That they may preserve thee from the wanton,
From the harlot that flattereth with her words.
- 6 When at the window of my house,
I looked through the lattice ;
- 7 And I beheld among the simple ones,
I discerned among the youths,
A young man void of understanding,
- 8 Passing through the street near the corner,
And he went the way to her house,
- 9 In the twilight, in the evening,
In the dark and gloomy night :
- 10 And behold, there met him a woman,
With the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.
- 11 (She is loud and stubborn ;
Her feet abide not in her house :
- 12 Now she is without, now in the streets,
And lieth in wait at every corner.)
- 13 And she caught him, and kissed him,
And with an impudent face said unto him,
- 14 “ I have a sacrificial-banquet with me ;
“ This day I have paid my vows :
- 15 “ Therefore came I forth to meet thee,
“ Diligently to seek thee, and have found thee.
- 16 “ I have decked my couch with coverings of
tapestry,
“ With embroideries of Egyptian linen.
- 17 “ I have perfumed my bed,
“ With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
- 18 “ Come, let us take our fill of love until the
morning ;
“ Let us solace ourselves with loves.

- 19 " For the master is not at home,
" He is gone a long journey ;
- 20 " He hath taken a purse of money with him,
" *And* will come home at the time appointed."
- 21 She allured him with her much-persuasive speech,
With the flattery of her lips she seduced him.
- 22 He follows her immediately,
As an ox goeth to the slaughter,
Or as a fool to the correction of the stocks,
- 23 Till a dart strike through his liver ;
Or as a bird hasteth to the snare,
And knoweth not that it *is set* for its life.
- 24 And now, O youths, hearken unto me,
And attend to the words of my mouth ;
- 25 Let not thine heart incline to her ways ;
Go not astray in her paths.
- 26 For she hath cast down many wounded,
And very many are all those that have been slain
by her.
- 27 Her house is the way to Hades,
Going down to the chambers of death.

CHAPTER VIII.

- 1 DOTH not wisdom make proclamation ?
And understanding send forth her voice ?
- 2 On the top of the high places by the ways ;
In the paths she taketh up her station :
- 3 At the gates, at the entrance of the city,
At the door-ways she exclaimeth ;
- 4 " To you, O men, I make proclamation ;
" And my voice *is addressed* to the sons of men.

- 5 “ O ye simple, exercise prudence ;
“ And, ye fools, be of an understanding heart.
- 6 “ Hear, for I will speak excellent things,
“ And the opening of my lips shall be right things.
- 7 “ For my mouth shall speak truth ;
“ And wickedness is an abomination to my lips.
- 8 “ Righteous are all the words of my mouth ;
“ There is nothing in them crooked or perverse.
- 9 “ They are all plain to him that understandeth,
“ And right to them that find knowledge.
- 10 “ Receive my instruction, and not silver,
“ And knowledge rather than fine gold :
- 11 “ For wisdom is better than gems,
“ And all the things that can be desired are not to be compared to it.

- 12 “ I Wisdom dwell with prudence ;
“ I present the knowledge of discreet things.
- 13 “ The fear of Jehovah is to hate evil ;
“ Pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way,
“ And the perverse mouth do I hate.
- 14 “ Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom,
“ I *am* understanding ; I have strength.
- 15 “ By me kings reign,
“ And princes decree justice.
- 16 “ By me princes rule,
“ And all the judges of the earth are illustrious.
- 17 “ I love them that love me,
“ And those that seek me diligently shall find me.
- 18 “ Riches and honour are with me ;
“ *Even* durable riches, and righteousness.

- 19 “ My fruit is better than gold, even solid gold ;
“ And my produce than choice silver.
- 20 “ I march in the way of righteousness,
“ In the midst of the paths of justice ;
- 21 “ That I may cause those that love me to inherit
true riches ;
“ And that I may make their treasures full.
- 22 “ Jehovah possessed me, the Beginning of his way,
“ Before his works of old.
- 23 “ I was anointed from everlasting,
“ From the beginning, before the world was.
- 24 “ When there were no depths I was born ;
“ When there were no fountains abounding with
water.
- 25 “ Before the mountains were settled,
“ Before the hills *were*, I was born.
- 26 “ While he had not yet made the earth, nor the
plains,
“ Nor the summits of the dust of the world.
- 27 “ When he prepared the heavens, I was there ;
“ When he traced out the circle above the face
of the deep ;
- 28 “ When he established the clouds above ;
“ When he strengthened the fountains of the deep ;
- 29 “ When he gave to the sea its bounds,
“ That the waters should not pass its limits ;
“ When he traced out the foundations of the earth ;
- 30 “ Then I, the Fabricator, was by him ;
“ And I was *his* daily delight,
“ Rejoicing always in his sight ;
- 31 “ Rejoicing in his whole creation ;
“ But my delight is with the sons of men.

- 32 " And now, O children, hearken unto me,
 " For happy are they that keep my ways.
- 33 " Hear instruction, and be wise,
 " And reject it not.
- 34 " Happy is the man that heareth me,
 " Watching daily at my gates,
 " Waiting at the posts of my doors.
- 35 " For he that findeth me findeth life,
 " And shall obtain favour from Jehovah;
- 36 " But he that wanders from me injures his own
 soul ;
 " *And* all they that hate me love death."

CHAPTER IX.

- 1 WISDOM hath built her house ;
 She hath hewn out her seven pillars ;
- 2 She hath killed her fatlings ;
 She hath mingled her wine ;
 She hath also furnished her table ;
- 3 She hath sent forth her maidens ;
 She proclaimeth upon the highest places of the city
- 4 " Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither ;"
 To him that wanteth understanding, she saith,
- 5 " Come, eat of my bread,
 " And drink of the wine *which* I have mingled ;
- 6 " Forsake the foolish, and live ;
 " And go in the way of understanding.
- 7 " He that reproveth a scorner getteth disgrace,
 " And he that showeth the wicked his faults.
- 8 " Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee :
 " Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.

- 9 “ Give *reproof* to a wise man, and he will become still wiser,
“ Teach a righteous man, and he will increase in true knowledge.
- 10 “ The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom ;
“ And the knowledge of the Holy-One is understanding.
- 11 “ For by me thy days shall be multiplied,
“ And the years of thy life shall be increased.
- 12 “ If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself ;
“ But if thou be a scorner, thou alone shall bear the punishment.”
- 13 A foolish woman is clamorous,
She is simple, and regardeth nothing ;
- 14 And she sitteth at the door of her house,
On a lofty seat, in the high places of the city,
- 15 Inviting the passengers,
Who are proceeding on their ways ; *saying*,
- 16 “ Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither ;”
And to him that wanteth understanding, she saith,
- 17 “ Stolen waters are sweet,
“ And the bread of concealment is pleasant.”
- 18 But he knoweth not that the dead are there,
That her guests are in the depths of Hades.

CHAPTER X.

1 THE Proverbs of Solomon.

A wise son maketh a glad father ;
But a foolish son is the grief of his mother.

- 2 Treasures of wickedness profit nothing ;
But righteousness delivereth from death.

- 3 Jehovah will not suffer the righteous to famish ;
But he casteth off the iniquity of the wicked.
- 4 He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand ;
But the hand of the diligent maketh rich.
- 5 He that gathereth in summer is a wise son ;
But he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that
causeth shame.
- 6 Blessings are upon the head of the righteous ;
But violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.
- 7 The memory of the righteous is blessed ;
But the name of the wicked shall rot.
- 8 The wise of heart will admit precepts ;
But a prating fool shall fall.
- 9 He that walketh uprightly walketh surely ;
But he that perverteth his ways shall be known.
- 10 He that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow ;
But a prating fool shall fall.
- 11 The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life ;
But violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.
- 12 Hatred stirreth up strifes ;
But love covereth all sins.
- 13 In the lips of the intelligent wisdom is found ;
But a rod is for the back of him that is void of
understanding.
- 14 The wise treasure up knowledge ;
But destruction is near the mouth of the foolish.

- 15 The rich man's wealth is his strong city ;
 But the destruction of the poor is their poverty
- 16 The labour of the righteous *tendeth* to life ;
 But the produce of the wicked to destruction.
- 17 He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction ;
 But he that refuseth reproof erreth.
- 18 He that concealeth hatred *hath* lying lips ;
 And he that uttereth slander is a fool.
- 19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin ;
 But he that refraineth his lips acts wisely.
- 20 The tongue of the righteous is *as* choice silver ;
 But the heart of the wicked is of little worth.
- 21 The lips of the righteous instruct many ;
 But fools die through the want of understanding.
- 22 The blessing of Jehovah ! it maketh rich ;
 And he addeth not sorrow with it.
- 23 As it is a pleasure to a fool to do mischief ;
 So is wisdom *a pleasure* to a man of understanding.
- 24 The fear of the wicked ! it shall come upon him ;
 But the desire of the righteous shall be granted.
- 25 When the tempest beats, the wicked are no more ;
 But the righteous *have* an everlasting foundation.
- 26 As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes ;
 So is a sluggard to them that send him.
- 27 The fear of Jehovah prolongeth days ;
 But the years of the wicked shall be shortened.

- 28 The hope of the righteous is joyful ;
But the expectation of the wicked shall perish.
- 29 The way of Jehovah is strength to the upright ;
But destruction to the workers of iniquity.
- 30 The righteous shall never be removed ;
But the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.
- 31 The mouth of the righteous bringeth forth wisdom ;
But the perverse tongue shall be cut out.
- 32 The lips of the righteous love what is acceptable ;
But the mouth of the wicked *loveth* perverseness.

CHAPTER XI.

- 1 A FALSE balance is an abomination to Jehovah ;
But a just weight is his delight.
- 2 *When* pride cometh, then cometh shame ;
But with the humble is wisdom.
- 3 The integrity of the upright shall guide them ;
But the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.
- 4 Riches profit not in the day of wrath ;
But righteousness delivereth from death.
- 5 The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way ;
But the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.
- 6 The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them ;
But transgressors shall be taken by *their own* iniquity.

- 7 When a wicked man dieth *his* hope perisheth ;
And the expectation of the unjust perisheth.
- 8 The righteous is delivered out of trouble ;
And the wicked cometh in his stead.
- 9 With *his* mouth the hypocrite destroyeth his
neighbour ;
But through knowledge shall the just be delivered.
- 10 At the prosperity of the righteous the city re-
joiceth ;
But at the destruction of the wicked it exults.
- 11 By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted ;
But by the mouth of the wicked it is overthrown.
- 12 He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neigh-
bour ;
But a man of understanding keepeth silence.
- 13 A talebearer walketh about revealing secrets ;
But he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth a
matter.
- 14 Where no counsel is the people fall ;
But in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.
- 15 A *man* shall suffer when he is surety for a
stranger ;
But he that hateth suretiship is sure.
- 16 A benevolent woman obtaineth honour, .
As the mighty obtain riches.
- 17 The merciful man doth good to his own soul ;
But he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh.

- 18 The wicked toil for a deceitful recompense ;
But he that soweth righteousness *has* a sure
reward.
- 19 Certainly righteousness *tendeth* to life ;
But he that pursueth veil, *pursueth it* to his own
death.
- 20 The perverse of heart are an abomination to
Jehovah ;
But the upright in *their* way are his delight.
- 21 *Though* hand *join* in hand the wicked shall not be
unpunished ;
But the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.
- 22 As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout,
So is a fair woman which is without discretion.
- 23 The desire of the righteous is only good ;
But the expectation of the wicked is wrath.
- 24 There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth ;
And there is that withholdeth more than is right,
but yet *it tendeth* to poverty ;
- 25 The liberal soul shall be made fat ;
And he that watereth shall be watered also himself.
- 26 He that withholdeth corn the people will curse
him ;
But blessing shall be upon the head of him that
selleth it.
- 27 He that diligently seeketh good seeketh favour ;
But he that searcheth evil, it shall come unto him.
- 28 He that trusteth in his riches shall fall ;
But the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

- 29 He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind ;
And the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart.
- 30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life ;
And he that winneth souls is wise.
- 31 Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth ;
Yea also shall the wicked and the sinner.

CHAPTER XII.

- 1 WHoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge ;
But he that hateth reproof is brutish.
- 2 A good man obtaineth favour from Jehovah ;
But a man of wicked devices will he condemn :
- 3 A man shall not be established by wickedness ;
But the root of the righteous shall not be moved.
- 4 A virtuous wife is a crown to her husband ;
But she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness to his bones.
- 5 The thoughts of the righteous are just ;
But the counsels of the wicked are deceit :
- 6 The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood ,
But the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.
- 7 The wicked are overthrown, and are not ;
But the house of the righteous shall stand.
- 8 A man shall be commended according to his wisdom ;
But the perverse of heart shall be despised.

- 9 Better is he that is despised, and is servant to himself,
Than he that honoureth himself, and is destitute of bread.
- 10 A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast;
But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.
- 11 He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread;
But he that followeth vanity is void of understanding.
- 12 The wicked desire the net of the evil;
But the root of the righteous yieldeth *fruit*.
- 13 In the transgression of the lips is an evil snare;
But the righteous shall escape from trouble.
- 14 A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of *his* mouth;
And the recompense of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.
- 15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes;
But the wise man hearkeneth unto counsel.
- 16 A fool's wrath is instantly known;
But a prudent man covereth shame.
- 17 A righteous witness speaketh truth;
But a false witness deceit.
- 18 There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword;
But the tongue of the wise is a healing medicine.

- 19 The lip of truth shall be established for ever ;
But a lying tongue is only for a moment.
- 20 Deceit is in the heart of them that devise evil ;
But to the counsellors of peace is joy.
- 21 There shall no evil happen to the righteous ;
But the wicked shall be filled with affliction.
- 22 Lying lips are an abomination to Jehovah ;
But men of veracity are his delight.
- 23 A prudent man concealeth knowledge ;
But the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.
- 24 The hand of the diligent shall bear rule ;
But the slothful shall be under tribute.
- 25 Trouble in the heart of man maketh it stoop ;
But a kind word maketh it glad.
- 26 The righteous explore their pastures ;
But the way of the wicked seduceth them.
- 27 The slothful man roasteth not that which he took
in hunting ;
But diligence is the most precious wealth.
- 28 In the way of righteousness is life ;
And in the pathway *thereof* there is no death.

CHAPTER XIII.

- 1 A WISE son *heareth* his father's instruction ;
But a scorner heareth not rebuke.
- 2 A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth ;
But the soul of transgressors *shall eat* violence.

- 3 He that keepeth his mouth guardeth his life ;
But he that is rash with his lips shall have destruction.
- 4 The sluggard desireth, and hath nothing ;
 But the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.
- 5 A righteous man hateth a false word ;
 But a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.
- 6 Righteousness keepeth the upright in the way ;
 But wickedness overthroweth the sinner.
- 7 There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing ;
There is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.
- 8 The protection of a man's life are his riches ;
 But do not the poor hear rebuke ?
- 9 The light of the righteous rejoiceth ;
 But the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.
- 10 Ignorance joined with pride produces contention ;
 But with those that deliberate there is wisdom.
- 11 Wealth through vanity is diminished ;
 But he that gathereth cautiously shall increase.
- 12 Hope deferred maketh the heart sick ;
 But *when* the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.
- 13 Whoso despiseth the word shall be punished ;
 But he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.

- 14 The doctrine of the wise is a fountain of life,
To avoid the snares of death.
- 15 Good understanding procureth favour ;
But the way of transgressors is rough.
- 16 Every prudent man acts with knowledge ;
But a fool spreadeth abroad *his* folly.
- 17 A wicked messenger falleth into mischief ;
But a faithful ambassador is a healing medicine.
- 18 Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth
instruction ;
But he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.
- 19 The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul ;
Therefore it is abomination to fools to depart
from evil.
- 20 He that walketh with the wise will be wise ;
But a companion of fools shall be destroyed.
- 21 Evil pursueth sinners ;
But to the righteous good shall be repayed.
- 22 A good man maketh *his* posterity his heirs ;
But the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the
righteous.
- 23 Much food is produced by the tillage of rulers ;
But it happeneth that it is destroyed for want of
judgment.
- 24 He that spareth the rod hateth his son ;
But he that loveth him chastiseth him betimes.
- 25 The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul ;
But the belly of the wicked shall want.

CHAPTER XIV.

- 1 EVERY wise woman (*wife*) buildeth her house;
But the foolish pulleth it down with her hands.
- 2 He that walketh in his uprightness feareth Jehovah;
But he that is perverse in his ways despiseth him.
- 3 In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride;
But the lips of the wise shall preserve them.
- 4 Where no oxen are the crib is clean;
But much produce is by the strength of the ox.
- 5 A faithful witness will not lie;
But a false witness will utter lies.
- 6 A scorner seeketh wisdom, and *findeth it* not;
But knowledge is easy to him that hath understanding.
- 7 Go from the presence of a foolish man,
When thou perceivest not *in him* the lips of knowledge.
- 8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way;
But the folly of fools is deceitful.
- 9 Fools make a mock at sin;
But among the upright there is favour.
- 10 The heart knoweth its own bitterness;
And a stranger doth not intermeddle with its joy.
- 11 The house of the wicked shall be overthrown;
But the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.

- 12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man ;
But the end thereof are the ways of death.
- 13 Even by laughter the heart is made sorrowful ;
And the end of mirth is sadness.
- 14 The backslider in heart shall be filled with his
own ways ;
And a good man *shall be filled* with his.
- 15 The simple believeth every word ;
But a prudent man considereth his going.
- 16 A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil ;
But the fool transgresseth, and is confident.
- 17 He that is soon angry acteth foolishly ;
And a man of wicked devices is hated.
- 18 The simple inherit folly ;
But the prudent shall be crowned with knowledge.
- 19 The evil bow before the good ;
And the wicked at the gates of the righteous.
- 20 The poor is hated even by his own neighbour ;
But the rich have many friends.
- 21 He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth ;
But he that hath mercy on the poor—happy is he.
- 22 Do they not err that devise evil ?
But mercy and truth *shall be* to them that devise
good.
- 23 In all labour there is profit ;
But the talk of the lips *tendeth* only to penury.

- 24 The crown of the wise is their riches ;
But the opulence of fools is folly.
- 25 A faithful witness delivereth souls ;
 But a deceitful *witness* speaketh lies.
- 26 In the fear of Jehovah is strong confidence ;
 And his children shall have a place of refuge.
- 27 The fear of Jehovah is a fountain of life,
 To avoid the snares of death.
- 28 In the multitude of people is the king's honour ;
 But in the want of people is the destruction of the
 prince.
- 29 He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding ;
 But he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.
- 30 A sound heart is the life of the flesh ;
 But envy the rottenness of the bones.
- 31 He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his
 Maker ;
 But he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.
- 32 The wicked is driven away in his wickedness ;
 But the righteous hath hope in his death.
- 33 Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath
 understanding ;
 But *that which* is in the midst of fools is known.
- 34 Righteousness exalteth a nation ;
 But sin is a reproach to any people.
- 35 The king's favour is toward a wise servant ;
 But his wrath is *against* him that causeth shame.

CHAPTER XV.

- 1 A SOFT answer turneth away wrath ;
But grievous words stir up anger.
- 2 The tongue of the wise maketh knowledge agreeable ;
But the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.
- 3 The eyes of Jehovah are in every place,
Beholding the evil and the good.
- 4 The healing medicine of the tongue is a tree of life ;
But perverseness therein afflicteth the spirit.
- 5 A fool despiseth his father's instruction ;
But he that regardeth reproof becometh prudent.
- 6 In the house of the righteous is much treasure ;
But in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.
- 7 The lips of the wise disseminate knowledge ;
But the heart of the foolish doeth not so.
- 8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to
Jehovah ;
But the prayer of the upright is his delight.
- 9 The way of the wicked is an abomination to
Jehovah ;
But he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.
- 10 Correction is grievous to him that forsaketh the way ;
And he that hateth reproof shall die.
- 11 Hades and the seats of destruction are open to
Jehovah ;
How much more the hearts of the children of men ?

- 12 A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him,
Neither will he go unto the wise.
- 13 A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance ;
But by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.
- 14 The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh
knowledge ;
But the mouth of fools feedeth on folly.
- 15 All the days of the afflicted are evil ;
But he that is of a merry heart hath a continual
feast.
- 16 Better is a little with the fear of Jehovah,
Than great treasure, and trouble therewith.
- 17 Better is a repast of herbs where love is,
Than a stalled ox, and hatred therewith.
- 18 A wrathful man stirreth up strife ;
But he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.
- 19 The way of the slothful man is like an hedge of
thorns ;
But the way of the righteous is made plain.
- 20 A wise son maketh a glad father ;
But a foolish man despiseth his mother.
- 21 Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom ;
But a man of understanding walketh uprightly.
- 22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed ;
But in the multitude of counsellors they are
established.

- 23 A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth ;
And a word *spoken* in season, how good is it!
- 24 The way of life above is for the prudent man,
That he may avoid Hades beneath.
- 25 Jehovah will destroy the house of the proud ;
But he will establish the border of the widow.
- 26 The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to
Jehovah ;
But *the words* of the pure are pleasant words.
- 27 He that desireth unjust gain troubleth his own
house ;
But he that hateth gifts shall live.
- 28 The heart of the righteous studieth that it may
answer ;
But the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil
things.
- 29 Jehovah is far from the wicked ;
But he heareth the prayer of the righteous.
- 30 As the light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart ;
So an honest fame is cheering to a man.
- 31 The ear that regardeth the reproof of life,
Abideth among the wise.
- 32 He that refuseth correction despiseth his own
soul ;
But he that regardeth reproof getteth understand-
ing.
- 33 The fear of Jehovah is the instruction of wisdom ;
And before honour is humility.

CHAPTER XVI.

- 1 THE deliberations of the heart in man,
And the utterance of the tongue, *are* from Jehovah.
- 2 All the ways of a man may be right in his own eyes;
But Jehovah weigheth the spirits.
- 3 Commit thy works unto Jehovah,
And thy designs shall be established.
- 4 Jehovah hath made all things for himself;
Yea, even the wicked he daily sustains.
- 5 Every one that is proud of heart is an abomination
to Jehovah;
Though hand *join* in hand he shall not be un-
punished.
- 6 Through mercy and truth iniquity is expiated;
And through the fear of Jehovah *men* depart from
evil.
- 7 When a man's ways please Jehovah,
He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with
him.
- 8 Better is a little with righteousness,
Than great revenues without right.
- 9 A man's heart deviseth his way;
But Jehovah directeth his steps.
- 10 Divination is upon the lips of the king;
His mouth will not transgress in judgment.
- 11 A just weight and balance are Jehovah's;
All the weights of the bag are his work.

- 12 It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness ;
For the throne is established by righteousness.
- 13 Righteous lips are the delight of kings ;
And they love him that speaketh right.
- 14 The wrath of a king is as messengers of death ;
But a wise man will appease it :
- 15 In the light of the king's countenance is life ;
And his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.
- 16 How much better is it to get wisdom than gold ?
And to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver ?
- 17 The highway of the upright is to depart from evil ;
And he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.
- 18 Pride precedeth destruction ;
And a haughty spirit precedeth a downfall :
- 19 It is better to be of an humble spirit with the lowly,
Than to divide the spoil with the proud.
- 20 He that understandeth the word shall find good ;
And he that trusteth in Jehovah—happy is he.
- 21 The wise in heart shall be called prudent ;
And the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.
- 22 Prudence is a fountain of life to him that hath it ;
But the instruction of fools is folly.
- 23 The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth ;
And addeth learning to his lips.

- 24 Pleasant words are *as* an honeycomb,
Sweet to the soul, and a healing medicine to the
bones.
- 25 There is a way that seemeth right unto a man ;
But the end thereof are the ways of death.
- 26 The body of the labourer laboureth for himself ;
For his mouth layeth this burthen upon him.
- 27 An ungodly man deviseth evil ;
And on his lips there is a burning fire.
- 28 A perverse man soweth strife ;
And a whisperer separateth chief friends.
- 29 A malicious man enticeth his neighbour,
And leadeth him into the way that is not good.
- 30 He shutteth his eyes to devise perverse things ;
Moving his lips he perfecteth evil.
- 31 The hoary head is a crown of glory,
When it is found in the way of righteousness.
- 32 He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty ;
And he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a
city.
- 33 The lot is cast into the lap ;
But the whole disposing thereof is from Jehovah.

CHAPTER XVII.

- 1 BETTER is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith,
Than a house full of sacrificial-banquets with strife.
- 2 A wise servant shall have rule over a son that
causeth shame,
And shall have part of the inheritance among the
brethren.
- 3 The fining-pot is for silver, and the furnace for
gold ;
But Jehovah trieth the hearts.
- 4 A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips ;
And a liar giveth ear to a wicked tongue.
- 5 Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker ;
And he that is glad at calamities shall not be
unpunished.
- 6 Children's children are the crown of old men ;
And the glory of children are their fathers.
- 7 The lip of excellency becometh not a fool ;
Much less do lying lips a prince.
- 8 A gift is a precious stone in the eyes of him who
hath it ;
Whithersoever it turneth it prospereth.
- 9 He that concealeth a transgression procureth love ;
But he that repeateth a matter separateth friends.
- 10 Reproof hath more effect upon a man of under-
standing,
Than to strike a fool an hundred times.

- 11 Surely a rebellious man seeketh evil;
But a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.
- 12 Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man,
Rather than a fool in his folly.
- 13 Whoso rewardeth evil for good,
Evil shall not depart from his house.
- 14 The beginning of strife is *as* when one letteth out
water ;
Therefore before contention be meddled with
dismiss it.
- 15 He that justifieth the wicked, and he that con-
demneth the just,
Even both of them are an abomination to Jehovah.
- 16 Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool,
Seeing he hath no heart to get wisdom?
- 17 A friend loveth at all times ;
And a brother is born for adversity.
- 18 A man void of understanding joineth hands ;
And becometh surety in the presence of his friend.
- 19 He loveth transgression that loveth strife ;
And he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction.
- 20 He that hath a perverse heart findeth no good ;
And he that hath a double tongue falleth into evil.
- 21 He that begetteth a fool *doeth it* to his sorrow ;
And the father of a vicious son hath no joy.
- 22 A merry heart maketh a good medicine ;
But a broken spirit drieth the bones.

- 23 A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom,
To pervert the ways of judgment.
- 24 Wisdom is present with him that hath understanding ;
But the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth.
- 25 A foolish son is a grief to his father,
And bitterness to her that bare him.
- 26 Surely to punish the just is not good ;
Nor to strike princes for equity.
- 27 He that hath knowledge spareth his words ;
And he that is of a forbearing spirit is a man of understanding.
- 28 Even a fool, while he is silent, is counted wise ;
And he that shutteth his lips *is counted* prudent.

CHAPTER XVIII.

- 1 HE that separateth himself seeketh his desire ;
He dealeth in all sound wisdom.
- 2 A fool hath no delight in understanding ;
But rather in discovering his heart.
- 3 When the wicked cometh, *then* cometh contempt ;
And with ignominy *cometh* reproach.
- 4 The words of a man's mouth are *as* deep waters ;
And the fountain of wisdom as a flowing brook.
- 5 It is not good to accept the person of the wicked,
To overthrow the righteous in judgment.

- 6 A fool's lips enter into contention ;
And his mouth provoketh blows.
- 7 A fool's mouth is his destruction ;
And his lips are the snare of his soul.
- 8 The words of a talebearer are as wounds ;
And they go down into the innermost parts of the
belly.
- 9 He also that is slothful in his work
Is brother to him that is a great waster.
- 10 The name of Jehovah is a strong tower ;
The righteous runneth into it, and is safe.
- 11 A rich man's wealth is his strong city ;
And as an high wall in his own imagination.
- 12 Before calamity the heart of man is haughty ;
But before honour is humility.
- 13 He that answereth before he heareth,
It is folly and shame unto him.
- 14 The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity ;
But a wounded spirit who can bear ?
- 15 The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge ;
And the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.
- 16 A man's gift maketh room for him,
And bringeth him before great men.
- 17 He *seemeth* just that first pleadeth his cause ;
But his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.
- 18 The lot causeth contentions to cease ;
And divideth between the mighty.

- 19 A brother offended *is harder to be won* than a strong city ;
And *their* contentions are like the bars of a castle.
- 20 A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth ;
With the produce of his lips shall he be filled :
- 21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue ;
And they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.
- 22 Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing ;
And obtaineth favour from Jehovah.
- 23 The poor useth entreaties ;
But the rich answereth roughly.
- 24 The man that hath many friends is ready to be ruined ;
But there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

CHAPTER XIX.

- 1 BETTER is the poor that walketh in his integrity,
Than he that is perverse with his lips, though he be rich.
- 2 Also, that the soul be without knowledge is not good ;
And he that hasteth with *his* feet erreth.
- 3 The foolishness of man perverteth his way ;
And his heart murmureth against Jehovah.
- 4 Wealth maketh many friends ;
But the poor is separated from his neighbour.

- 5 A false witness shall not be unpunished ;
And he that speaketh lies shall not escape.
- 6 Many will entreat the favour of the prince ;
And every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.
- 7 All the brethren of the poor do hate him ;
How much more do his friends go far from him !
He pursueth *them* with words ; they are not *to be found*.
- 8 He that getteth wisdom loveth himself ;
He that keepeth understanding shall find good.
- 9 A false witness shall not be unpunished ;
And he that speaketh lies shall perish.
- 10 Delight is not seemly for a fool ;
Much less for a servant to have rule over princes.
- 11 The discretion of a man deferreth his anger ;
And it is his glory to pass over a transgression.
- 12 The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion ;
But his favour is as dew upon the grass.
- 13 A foolish son is the calamity of his father ;
And the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.
- 14 House and riches are a paternal inheritance ;
But a prudent wife is from Jehovah.
- 15 Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep ;
And an idle soul shall suffer hunger.

- 16 He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his soul;
But he that despiseth his ways shall die.
- 17 He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth to Jehovah;
And that which he hath given will he pay him again.
- 18 Chasten thy son while there is hope;
And thy soul will not desire his death.
- 19 A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment;
For if thou deliver *him* thou must do it again.
- 20 Hear counsel, and receive instruction,
That thou mayst be wise in thy latter end.
- 21 Many are the devices in a man's heart;
But the counsel of Jehovah!—it shall stand.
- 22 A desirable thing in man is his kindness;
And a poor man is better than a liar.
- 23 The fear of Jehovah *tendeth* to life;
And he that is full *of it* shall abide; evil shall not visit him.
- 24 A sluggard hideth his hand in the dish,
And will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.
- 25 Smite a scorner, and the simple man will become prudent;
And reprove one that hath understanding, *and* he will understand knowledge.

- 26 He that wasteth *his* father *and* chaseth away *his* mother,
Is a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.
- 27 Cease, my son, to hear the instruction,
That causeth to err from the words of knowledge.
- 28 An ungodly witness scorneth judgment;
And the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.
- 29 Judgments are prepared for scorers;
And stripes for the back of fools.

CHAPTER XX.

- 1 WINE is a mocker, strong drink is a disturber;
Whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.
- 2 The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion;
He that provoketh him to anger sinneth *against* his own soul.
- 3 It is an honour for a man to cease from strife;
But every fool will be meddling.
- 4 The sluggard will not plough by reason of the winter;
Therefore he shall seek in the harvest, but shall have nothing.
- 5 Counsel in the heart of man is *like* deep water;
But a man of understanding will draw it out.
- 6 Most men proclaim every man his own goodness;
But a faithful man who can find?

- 7 The righteous walketh in his integrity ;
His children after him are blessed.
- 8 A king that sitteth on the throne of judgment
Scattereth away all evil with his eyes.
- 9 Who can say, “ I have made my heart clean,
“ I am pure from my sin ? ”
- 10 Diverse weights, *and* diverse measures,
Are both of them alike an abomination to Jehovah.
- 11 Even a child will dissemble in his doings,
That in truth his work is pure, and in truth it is
right.
- 12 The hearing ear, and the seeing eye,
Jehovah hath made even both of them.
- 13 Love not sleep lest thou come to poverty ;
Open thine eyes, *and* thou shalt be satisfied with
bread.
- 14 “ It is vile, it is vile,” saith the buyer ;
But when he is gone his way then he boasteth.
- 15 There is gold, and a multitude of gems ;
But the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.
- 16 Take his garment when a stranger is surety ;
And take a pledge of him where strangers are
witnesses.
- 17 Bread of deceit is sweet to a man ;
But afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.
- 18 Establish purposes by counsel ;
And with good advice make war.

- 19 A talebearer walketh about revealing secrets ;
Therefore have no dealings with a babbler.
- 20 Whoso curseth his father or his mother,
His lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.
- 21 An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the be-
ginning ;
But the end thereof shall not be blessed.
- 22 Say not thou, “ I will recompense evil ;”
Wait on Jehovah, and he shall save thee.
- 23 Diverse weights are an abomination to Jehovah ;
And a false balance is not good.
- 24 A man's goings are from Jehovah ;
How, then, can a man understand his own way ?
- 25 The man is snared who devoureth that which is
holy,
And after vows *begins* to make inquiry.
- 26 A wise king scattereth the wicked ;
And bringeth the wheel over them.
- 27 The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah,
Searching all the inward parts of the belly.
- 28 Mercy and truth preserve the king ;
And his throne is upholden by mercy.
- 29 The glory of young men is their strength ;
And the beauty of old men is the gray head.
- 30 The bruises of a wound are a cleanser in a
wicked man ;
And stripes *cleanse* the inward parts of the belly.

CHAPTER XXI.

- 1 THE king's heart is a stream of water in the hand
of Jehovah ;
He turneth it whithersoever he will.
- 2 Every way of man may be right in his own eyes ;
But Jehovah weigheth the hearts.
- 3 To do justice and judgment,
Is more acceptable to Jehovah than sacrifice.
- 4 The high look, and the proud heart,
And the lamp of the wicked are sin.
- 5 The devices of the diligent *tend* certainly to
plenteousness ;
But of every one that is hasty, certainly to want.
- 6 The getting of treasures by a lying tongue,
Is a vanity agitated by them that seek death.
- 7 Destruction shall seize the wicked,
Because they refuse to do judgment.
- 8 The way of man is perverse and strange ;
But as for the pure, his work is upright.
- 9 It is better to dwell in the corner of the house-top,
Than with a brawling woman in a common house.
- 10 The soul of the wicked desireth evil ;
Even his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes.
- 11 When a scorner is punished the simple man is
made wise ;
And when the wise is instructed, he receiveth
knowledge.

- 12 The Just One acts wisely towards the house of
the wicked,
Overthrowing the wicked for *their* wickedness.
- 13 Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor,
He also shall cry himself, and shall not be heard.
- 14 A gift in secret pacifieth anger ;
And a reward in the bosom strong wrath.
- 15 It is joy to the just to do judgment ;
But destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.
- 16 The man that wandereth out of the way of under-
standing,
Shall remain in the congregation of the dead.
- 17 He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man ;
And he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.
- 18 The wicked is cut off instead of the righteous ;
And the transgressor instead of the upright.
- 19 It is better to dwell in the wilderness,
Than with a contentious and angry woman.
- 20 Desirable treasure and oil are in the dwelling of
the wise ;
But the foolish man squandereth them away.
- 21 He that followeth after righteousness and mercy,
Shall find life, righteousness, and honour.
- 22 A wise man scaleth the city of the mighty,
And casteth down the strength in which they
confide.
- 23 He that keepeth his mouth and his tongue,
Keepeth his soul from troubles.

- 24 Proud *and* haughty scorner is his name,
Who dealeth in the wrath of pride.
- 25 The desire of the slothful man killeth him ;
For his hands refuse to labour :
- 26 He coveteth eagerly all the day long ;
But the righteous giveth, and spareth not.
- 27 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination :
How much more when he bringeth it with a
wicked purpose ?
- 28 A false witness shall perish ;
But the man who heard speaketh convincingly.
- 29 A wicked man hardeneth his face ;
But as for the upright, he directeth his way.
- 30 There is no wisdom, nor understanding,
Nor counsel against Jehovah.
- 31 The horse is prepared against the day of battle ;
But safety is from Jehovah.

CHAPTER XXII.

- 1 A *good* name is rather to be chosen than great
riches ;
And favour is better than silver and gold.
- 2 The rich and poor meet together ;
Jehovah is the maker of them all.
- 3 The prudent man seeth the evil, and avoids it ;
But the simple pass on, and are punished.
- 4 The reward of humility *and* the fear of Jehovah,
Are riches, and honour, and life.

- 5 Thorns *and* snares are in the way of the perverse ;
But he that keepeth his soul shall be far from them.
- 6 Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it.
- 7 The rich ruleth over the poor ;
And the borrower is servant to the lender.
- 8 He that soweth iniquity shall reap affliction ;
And the rod of his anger shall be broken.
- 9 He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed ;
For he giveth of his bread to the poor.
- 10 Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out ;
Yea, strife and reproach shall cease.
- 11 He that loveth purity of heart,
His lips are kindness, *and* the king is his friend.
- 12 The eyes of Jehovah preserve the wise ;
But he overthroweth the affairs of the transgressor.
- 13 The slothful man saith, " There is a lion without,
" I shall be slain in the streets."
- 14 The mouth of harlots is a deep pit ;
He that is abhorred of Jehovah shall fall therein.
- 15 Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child ;
But the rod of correction shall drive it from him.
- 16 He that oppresseth the poor to magnify himself,
And he that giveth to the rich, *shall* surely come to want.
- 17 Incline thine ear, and hear the words of the wise,
And apply thine heart to my instructions :

- 18 For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee ;
They shall withal be ready on thy lips.
- 19 That thy trust may be in Jehovah,
I have taught thee this day, even thee.
- 20 Have I not written to thee excellent things,
In counsels, and in knowledge,
- 21 That I might teach thee the certainty of the words
of truth,
And that thou mightest answer words of truth to
them that send unto thee ?
- 22 Rob not the poor because he is poor ;
Neither oppress the afflicted in the gate :
- 23 For Jehovah will plead their cause,
And spoil the soul of those that spoil them.
- 24 Make no friendship with an angry man ;
And go not with a furious man ;
- 25 Lest thou learn his ways,
And get a snare to thy soul.
- 26 Be not thou one of them that join hands,
Or of them that are sureties for debts ;
- 27 Lest, if thou have nothing to pay with,
Thy bed be taken away from under thee.
- 28 Remove not the ancient landmark,
Which thy fathers have set.
- 29 Seest thou a man diligent in his business ?
He shall stand before kings ;
He shall not stand before mean men.

CHAPTER XXIII.

- 1 **WHEN** thou sittest down to eat with a ruler,
Consider diligently what is before thee;
- 2 And put a knife to thy throat,
If thou be a man given to appetite :
- 3 Be not desirous of his dainties ;
For they are deceitful meat.
- 4 Labour not to be rich ;
Cease from this thy prudence.
- 5 Wilt thou set thine eyes upon a transient thing ;
For *riches* certainly make themselves wings ;
They fly away as an eagle towards heaven.
- 6 Eat thou not the bread of him that bath an evil
eye ;
Neither desire thou his dainty meats :
- 7 For as he is vile in his soul, so is he ;
“ Eat and drink,” saith he to thee ;
But his heart is not with thee.
- 8 The morsel *which* thou hast eaten shalt thou
vomit up ;
And thou shalt rescind thy sweet words.
- 9 Speak not in the ears of a fool ;
For he will despise the wisdom of thy words.
- 10 Remove not the ancient landmark ;
And enter not into the fields of the fatherless :
- 11 For their Avenger is mighty :
He will plead their cause with thee.
- 12 Apply thine heart unto instruction ;
And thine ears to the words of knowledge.

- 13 Withhold not correction from a child ;
When thou beatest him with the rod he shall not
die.
- 14 Thou shalt beat him with the rod,
And shalt deliver his soul from Hades.
- 15 My son, if thy heart be wise,
My heart shall rejoice, even mine.
- 16 Yea, my reins shall rejoice,
When thy lips speak right things.
- 17 Let not thine heart envy sinners ;
But *be thou* in the fear of Jehovah all the day
long.
- 18 For surely there is a reward ;
And thy expectation shall not be cut off.
- 19 Hear thou, my son, and be wise,
And guide thine heart in the way.
- 20 Be not thou among wine-bibbers,
Among those who are lavish of flesh upon them-
selves.
- 21 For the drunkard and glutton shall come to poverty ;
And drowsiness shall clothe *itself* with rags.
- 22 Harken unto thy father that begat thee ;
And despise not thy mother when she is old.
- 23 Buy truth, and sell *it* not,
Also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.
- 24 The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice ;
And he that begetteth a wise *child* shall have joy
of him.

- 25 *Therefore* thy father and thy mother shall be glad;
And she that bare thee shall rejoice.
- 26 My son, give me thine heart,
And let thine eyes rejoice in my ways.
- 27 For a whore is a deep pit;
And a harlot is a narrow pit.
- 28 She also lieth in wait as a robber;
And increaseth the transgressors among men.
- 29 Who hath woe? Who hath concupiscence?
Who hath contentions? Who hath anxiety?
Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath red-
ness of eyes?
- 30 They that tarry long at the wine;
They that go to seek mixed wine.
- 31 Look not thou on the wine when it is red;
When it sparkles in the cup, *and* goeth down
pleasantly.
- 32 At the last it will bite like a serpent,
And sting like an adder.
- 33 Thine eyes will gaze upon harlots;
And thine heart will utter perverse things.
- 34 Yea, thou wilt be as he that lieth down in the
midst of the sea;
And as he that lieth on the top of a mast.
- 35 *Thou shalt say*, "They have stricken me, *but* I
felt no pain;
"They have beaten me, *but* I perceived it not:
"When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again."

CHAPTER XXIV.

- 1 ENVY thou not evil men;
Neither desire to be with them.
- 2 For their heart studieth destruction ;
And their lips talk of mischief.
- 3 Through wisdom is a house builded ;
And by understanding it is established.
- 4 And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled,
With all precious and pleasant riches.
- 5 A wise man is strong ;
And a man of knowledge increaseth strength.
- 6 For by wise counsel thou shalt wage thy war ;
And in the multitude of counsellors there is
safety.
- 7 Wisdom is too high for a fool ;
He openeth not his mouth in the gate.
- 8 He that deviseth to do evil,
Shall be called a malicious person.
- 9 An evil thought is sin ;
And the scorner is an abomination to men.
- 10 Dost thou faint in the day of adversity ?
Let adversity give thee strength.
- 11 Deliver them that are hurried away unto death,
And them that are about to be slain. If thou
forbear;

- 12 Although thou say, " Behold, we know not this man ;"
 Will not he that weigheth the heart consider *it* ?
 And will not he that keepeth thy soul know *it* ?
 And will he not render to every man according to his works ?
- 13 My son, *as* thou eatest honey because it is good,
 And *as* the honeycomb is sweet to thy taste ;
- 14 So let the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul :
 When thou hast found *it*, then there shall be a reward,
 And thy expectation shall not be cut off.
- 15 Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous,
 And demolish not his resting-place :
- 16 For the righteous man falleth seven times, and riseth up again ;
 But the wicked are overwhelmed with evil.
- 17 Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth ;
 And let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth ;
- 18 Lest Jehovah see *it*, and it displease him ;
 And he turn away his wrath from him *to thee*.
- 19 Emulate not evil men ;
 Envy not the wicked :
- 20 For there shall be no reward to the evil man ;
 The lamp of the wicked shall be put out.
- 21 My son, fear thou Jehovah and the king ;
 Meddle not with them that are given to change :
- 22 For their calamity shall rise suddenly ;
 And who knoweth the ruin of them both ?

- 23 These things also belong to the wise.
It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.
- 24 He that saith unto the wicked, "Thou art righteous ;"
Him shall the peoples curse, nations shall abhor him :
- 25 But to them that rebuke *the wicked* shall be favour,
And the blessing of the good shall come upon him,
- 26 *Every man* shall kiss *his* lips,
That giveth a right answer.
- 27 Prepare thy work without,
And make it ready in the field ;
Go afterwards, and build thy house.
- 28 Be not witness against thy neighbour without cause ;
Neither deceive with thy lips.
- 29 Say not, "I will do so to him as he hath done to me ;
"I will render to every man according to his work."
- 30 I went by the field of the slothful,
And by the vineyard of the man void of understanding ;
- 31 And, lo ! it was all grown over with thorns ;
Nettles had covered the face thereof,
And the stone wall thereof was broken down.
- 32 Then I saw, I considered *it* well ;
I looked, I received instruction :

- 33 *Thou desirest* a little sleep *more*, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep :
34 But thy poverty shall come as a traveller,
And thy want as an armed man.

CHAPTER XXV.

- 1 **THESE** also are the Proverbs of Solomon,
Which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah collected.
2 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing ;
But the honour of kings is to search out a matter.
3 The heavens for height, and the earth for depth,
And the heart of kings, there is no searching.
4 Take away the dross from the silver,
And there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.
5 Take away the wicked *from* before the king,
And his throne shall be established in righteousness.
6 Arrogate not honour in the presence of the king ;
And stand not in the place of the great.
7 For it is better that it be said unto thee,
“ Come up hither,” than that thou shouldest be
put lower,
In the presence of the prince whom thine eyes
have seen.
8 Go not forth hastily to contention,
Lest *thou know not* what to do in the end thereof,
When thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.

- 9 *If* thou debate thy cause with thy neighbour,
Yet discover not the secret of another :
- 10 Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame,
And thine infamy turn not away.
- 11 A word fitly spoken in its season,
Is like apples of gold in curiously wrought
baskets of silver.
- 12 *As* an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine
gold,
So is a wise reprover upon an attentive ear.
- 13 *As* the cold of snow, in the time of harvest,
So is a faithful messenger to them that send him ;
For he refresheth the soul of his masters.
- 14 Whoso boasteth of gifts that he never gives,
Is like clouds and wind without rain.
- 15 By long forbearing is a prince appeased ;
And a soft tongue breaketh the bone.
- 16 Hast thou found honey ? eat so much as is suf-
ficient for thee ;
Lest thou be satiated therewith, and vomit it.
- 17 Let thy foot be seldom in thy neighbour's house ;
Lest he be weary of thee, and hate thee.
- 18 A man that beareth false witness against his
neighbour,
Is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.
- 19 Confidence in the perfidious in the time of trouble,
Is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

- 20 *As* he that taketh away a garment in cold weather,
And as vinegar upon nitre,
So is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart.
- 21 If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat ;
And if he be thirsty, give him water to drink :
- 22 For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head ;
And Jehovah shall reward thee.
- 23 The north wind bringeth forth rain ;
And a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.
- 24 It is better to dwell in a corner of the house-top,
Than with a brawling woman in a common house.
- 25 *As* cold waters to a thirsty soul,
So is good news from a far country.
- 26 The righteous erring before the wicked,
Are *as* a muddy fountain, and a corrupt spring.
- 27 It is not good *for the righteous* to eat much honey ;
But to search their own glory is glorious.
- 28 He that hath no rule over his own spirit,
Is *like* a city that is broken down, *and* without
walls.

CHAPTER XXVI.

- 1 As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest ;
So honour is not seemly for a fool.
- 2 As the sparrow in wandering, and the swallow in
flying,
So the curse that is without cause shall not come.

- 3 A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass,
And a rod for the back of fools *are necessary*.
- 4 Answer not a fool according to his folly,
Lest thou also be like unto him :
- 5 Answer a fool according to his folly,
Lest he be wise in his own eyes.
- 6 He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool,
Cutteth off the feet, *and* drinketh damage.
- 7 As the légs are weak through lameness,
So is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
- 8 As he that bindeth a stone in a sling;
So is he that giveth honour to a fool.
- 9 As a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard;
So is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
- 10 The great *God* that formed all things,
Both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth the transgressors.
- 11 As a dog returneth to his vomit;
So a fool returneth to his folly.
- 12 Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit?
There is more hope of a fool than of him.
- 13 The slothful man saith, " There is a lion in the way,
" A lion is in the streets."
- 14 As the door turneth upon its hinges,
So doth the sluggard upon his bed.
- 15 The sluggard hideth his hand in the dish;
It wearies him to bring it to his mouth again.

- 16 The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit,
Than seven men that can return a discreet answer.
- 17 As he that taketh by the ears a dog that passeth by;
So is he that meddleth with contention that concerns him not.
- 18 As a madman who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death;
- 19 So is the man that deceiveth his neighbour,
And saith, "Am not I in sport!"
- 20 Where no wood is the fire goeth out;
And where there is no talebearer strife ceaseth.
- 21 As coals to burning coals, and wood to fire;
So is a contentious man to kindle strife.
- 22 The words of a talebearer are as wounds;
And they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.
- 23 As drossy silver laid upon a potsherd;
So are warm lips, and a wicked heart.
- 24 He that hateth dissembleth with his lips,
And layeth up deceit within him:
- 25 When he speaketh fair, believe him not;
For he is full of abominations in his heart.
- 26 Hatred may cover itself with acclamation;
But its wickedness shall be revealed in the congregation.
- 27 Whoso diggeth a pit *for another* shall fall into it;
And he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.
- 28 A lying tongue hateth those that are injured by it;
And a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

CHAPTER XXVII.

- 1 **Boast** not thyself of to-morrow ;
For thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.
- 2 Let another praise thee, and not thine own mouth ;
A stranger, and not thine own lips.
- 3 A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty ;
But a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.
- 4 Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous ;
But who is able to stand before envy ?
- 5 Open rebuke is better than secret love :
- 6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend ;
But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.
- 7 The full soul loatheth an honeycomb ;
But to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.
- 8 As a bird that wandereth from her nest ;
So is a man that wandereth from his place.
- 9 Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart ;
So doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.
- 10 Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not ;
Neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity,
For better is a friend that is near than a brother far off.
- 11 My son, be wise, and make my heart glad,
That I may answer him that reproacheth me.

- 12 The prudent man forseeth the evil, *and* avoids it ;
But the simple pass on, *and* are punished.
- 13 Take his garment when a stranger is surety ;
And take a pledge of him where strangers are
witnesses.
- 14 He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice,
rising early in the morning,
It shall be counted a curse to him.
- 15 A continual dropping in a very rainy day,
And a contentious woman are alike.
- 16 He that hideth her hideth the wind ;
And the ointment of his right hand betrayeth *itself*.
- 17 As iron is brightened by iron ;
So a man exhilarates the countenance of his friend.
- 18 Whoso keepeth the fig-tree shall eat the fruit
thereof ;
And he that waiteth on his master shall be
honoured.
- 19 As the face is to the face in water ;
So is the heart of a man to a man.
- 20 Hades and the seats of destruction are never full ;
So the eyes of man are never satisfied.
- 21 As the fining-pot to silver, and the furnace to gold ;
So is a man to the speech of him that praiseth
him.
- 22 Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar,
Among things pounded with a pestle ;
Yet will not his foolishness depart from him.

- 23 Be diligent to know the state of thy flock ;
Look well to thy herds :
- 24 For riches are not for ever ;
Neither is the crown from generation to generation.
- 25 The grass appeareth, and the herbage sheweth
itself,
And the herbs upon the mountains are gathered :
- 26 The lambs are for thy clothing,
And the he goats are the price of the field :
- 27 And there shall be goats' milk enough,
For thy food, and the food of thy household,
And *for* the maintenance of thy maidens.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

- 1 THE wicked flee when no man pursueth ;
But the righteous are bold as a lion.
- 2 By the rebellion of a land many are the princes
thereof ;
But by a man of understanding *and* knowledge
the state *thereof* shall be prolonged.
- 3 A man in power that is needy, and oppresseth
the poor,
Is *like* a sweeping rain which leaveth no food.
- 4 They that forsake the law praise the wicked ;
But such as keep the law contend with them.
- 5 Evil men understand not judgment,
But they that seek Jehovah understand all things.

- 6 Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity,
Than he that is perverse in *his* ways, though he
be rich.
- 7 He that keepeth the law is a wise son ;
But he that is a companion of prodigals shameth
his father.
- 8 He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his
substance,
He shall gather it for him that hath pity on the poor.
- 9 He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law,
Even his prayer shall be an abomination.
- 10 He that causeth the righteous to go astray in an
evil way,
He shall fall himself into his own pit ;
But the upright shall have good things in pos-
session.
- 11 The rich man is wise in his own conceit ;
But the poor man that hath understanding search-
eth him out.
- 12 When the righteous rejoice there is great glory ;
But when the wicked rise men conceal themselves.
- 13 He that covereth his sins shall not prosper ;
But he that confesseth and forsaketh *them* shall
have mercy.
- 14 Happy is the man that feareth always,
But he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into evil.
- 15 As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear ;
So is a wicked ruler over a poor people.

- 16 A prince void of understanding is a great oppressor ;
But he that hateth covetuousness shall prolong
his days.
- 17 A man that doeth violence to the blood of any
person,
Although he may flee to the pit, let no man stay
him.
- 18 Whoso walketh uprightly shall he saved ;
But he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at
once.
- 19 He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of
bread,
But he that followeth vanity shall have poverty
enough.
- 20 A faithful man shall abound with blessings ;
But he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be
innocent.
- 21 To have respect of persons is not good ;
Yet for a piece of bread will a man transgress.
- 22 He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye,
And considereth not that poverty shall come upon
him.
- 23 He that rebuketh a man after my *precepts*,
Shall find more favour than he that flattereth with
his tongue.
- 24 Whoso robbeth his father or his mother,
And saith, " It is no transgression ;"
The same is the companion of a destroyer.

- 25 A man of insatiable desire stirreth up strife;
But he that putteth his trust in Jehovah shall be
made fat.
- 26 He that trusteth in his own prudence is a fool;
But whoso walketh wisely shall be delivered.
- 27 He that giveth unto the poor shall not want;
But he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.
- 28 When the wicked rise men hide themselves;
But when they perish the righteous increase.

CHAPTER XXIX.

- 1 HE that being reprovèd hardeneth *his* neck,
Shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without
remedy.
- 2 When the righteous are in authority the people
rejoice;
But when the wicked bear rule the people mourn.
- 3 Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father;
But he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth
his substance.
- 4 A king by judgment establisheth the land;
But he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.
- 5 A man that flattereth his neighbour,
Spreadeth a net for his feet.
- 6 In the transgression of an evil man there is a
snare;
But the righteous do sing and rejoice.

- 7 The righteous consider the cause of the poor;
But the wicked regard not knowledge.
- 8 Scornful men inflame the city ;
But wise men turn away wrath.
- 9 *When* a wise man contendeth with a fool,
Whether he rage or laugh there is no rest.
- 10 The blood-thirsty hate the upright,
And seek the life of the just.
- 11 A fool uttereth all his mind ;
But a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.
- 12 If a ruler hearken to lies,
All his servants will be wicked.
- 13 The poor and the rich meet together ;
Jehovah lighteneth both their eyes.
- 14 The king that faithfully judgeth the poor,
His throne shall be established for ever.
- 15 The rod and reproof give wisdom ;
But a child left *to himself* bringeth shame to his
mother.
- 16 When the wicked are in authority transgression
increaseth ;
But the righteous shall see their fall.
- 17 Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest ;
Yea, he shall give delight to thy soul.
- 18 Where there is no religion the people perish ;
But he that keepeth the law—happy is he.

- 19 A *wicked* servant will not be corrected by words;
For though he understand he will not obey.
- 20 Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words?
There is more hope of a fool than of him.
- 21 He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a
child,
Certainly at length shall lament it.
- 22 An angry man stirreth up strife;
And a furious man aboundeth in transgression.
- 23 A man's pride shall bring him low;
But honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.
- 24 Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul,
He heareth the adjuration yet will not confess.
- 25 The fear of man bringeth a snare;
But he that trusteth in Jehovah shall be exalted.
- 26 Many seek the ruler's favour;
But every man's judgment *cometh* from Jehovah.
- 27 An unjust man is an abomination to the just;
And he that is upright in his way is an abomina-
tion to the wicked.

CHAPTER XXX.

- 1 THE words of Agur, the son of Jakeh,
Even the prophecy which he spake unto Ithiel,
Even unto Ithiel and Ucal.
- 2 Surely I am more brutish than any man,
And have not the understanding of a man.

- 3 I neither learned wisdom,
Nor have the knowledge of the holy.
- 4 Who hath ascended into heaven and descended ?
Who hath gathered the wind in his fists ?
Who hath bound the waters in a garment ?
Who hath established all the ends of the earth ?
What is his name, and what is his son's name ?
Declare if thou canst tell.
- 5 Every word of God is pure ;
He is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.
- 6 Add thou not unto his words,
Lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.
- 7 Two things I request of thee, *O God* ;
Deny me *them* not before I die :
- 8 Remove far from me vanity and lies ;
Give me neither poverty nor riches ;
But feed me with food convenient for me :
- 9 Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, “ Who is Jehovah ? ”
Or lest I be poor, and steal, and profane the name of my God.
- 10 Accuse not a servant unto his master,
Lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.
- 11 There is a generation that curseth their father,
And doth not bless their mother.
- 12 There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes,
And yet is not washed from their filthiness.
- 13 There is a generation, *O* how lofty are their eyes !
And their eyelids are lifted up.

- 14 There is a generation whose teeth are swords,
and their grinders knives,
To devour the poor from off the earth, and the
needy from among men.
- 15 The horse-leech hath two daughters, *crying*,
“ Give, give.”
There are three things that are never satisfied ;
Yea, four things say not, “ It is enough ;”
- 16 Hades, and the barren womb,
The earth that is not filled with water,
And the fire that saith not, “ It is enough.”
- 17 The eye that mocketh at *his* father,
And despiseth obedience to *his* mother,
The ravens of the valley shall pick it out,
And the young eagles shall eat it.
- 18 There are three things which are too wonderful
for me,
Yea, four which I know not :
- 19 The way of an eagle in the air,
The way of a serpent upon a rock,
The way of a ship in the midst of the sea,
And the way of a man with a maid.
- 20 Such is the way of an adulterous woman ;
She eateth and wipeth her mouth,
And saith, “ I have done no wickedness.”
- 21 For three things the earth is disquieted,
And for four which it cannot bear ;
- 22 For a servant when he reigneth ;
And a fool when he is filled with meat ;
- 23 For an odious woman when she is married ;
And an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.

- 24 There are four things which are little upon the
earth ;
But they are exceeding wise :
- 25 The ants are a people not strong,
Yet they prepare their meat in the summer.
- 26 The conies are a people not strong,
Yet they make their houses in the rocks.
- 27 The locusts have no king,
Yet they go forth all of them in order.
- 28 The spider taketh hold with her hands,
And is in kings' palaces.
- 29 There are three things which go well,
Yea, four are comely in going :
- 30 A lion which is the most valiant of beasts,
And turneth not away for any ;
- 31 A greyhound ; an he goat also ;
And a king against whom there is no rising up.
- 32 If thou hast foolishly exalted thyself,
Or if thou hast thought evil,
Lay thine hand upon thy mouth :
- 33 For the churning of milk bringeth forth butter ;
And the wringing of the nose bringeth forth
blood ;
And the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.

CHAPTER XXXI.

- 1 THE words of king Lemuel,
Even the prophecy which his mother taught him.
- 2 What *shall I say to thee*, my son ?
And what, O son of my womb !
And what, O son of my vows !
- 3 Give not thy strength unto women ;
Nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.
- 4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel,
It is not for kings to drink wine,
Nor for princes to desire strong drink ;
- 5 Lest they drink, and forget the law,
And pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.
- 6 Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish ;
And wine unto those that are of heavy hearts ;
- 7 That they may drink, and forget their poverty,
And remember their misery no more.
- 8 Open thy mouth for the dumb ;
Plead thou the cause of the oppressed.
- 9 Open thy mouth, judge righteously,
And plead the cause of the poor and needy.
- 10 Who can find a virtuous wife ?
For her price is far above gems.
- 11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her,
And he shall not want domestic wealth.
- 12 She will do him good, and not evil,
All the days of her life.
- 13 She seeketh wool and flax,
And worketh willingly with her hands.

- 14 She is like a merchant's ships ;
She bringeth her food from afar.
- 15 She riseth also while it is yet night,
And giveth meat to her household,
And a portion to her maidens.
- 16 She considereth a field, and buyeth it,
With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vine-
yard.
- 17 She girdeth her loins with strength,
And strengtheneth her arms.
- 18 She perceiveth that her merchandise is good ;
Her lamp goeth not out by night.
- 19 She layeth her hands to the spindle,
And her hands hold the distaff.
- 20 She stretcheth out her hand to the poor ;
Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
- 21 She is not afraid of snow for her household ;
For all her household are clothed with double
garments.
- 22 She maketh herself coverings of tapestry ;
Her clothing is linen and purple.
- 23 Her husband is respected in the gates,
When he sitteth among the elders of the land.
- 24 She maketh vestments, and selleth them ;
And delivereth girdles to the merchant.
- 25 Strength and honour are her clothing,
And she shall rejoice in time to come.
- 26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom,
And upon her tongue is the law of kindness.
- 27 She superintendeth the ways of her household,
And eateth not the bread of idleness.

- 28 Her children rise up, and call her blessed ;
 Her husband *also*, and he praiseth her.
- 29 Many women have acted virtuously ;
 But thou excellest them all.
- 30 Favour is deceitful, and beauty vain ;
But the woman that feareth Jehovah,—she shall
 be praised.
- 31 Give her of the fruit of her hands ;
 And let her own works praise her in the gates.

End of the Proverbs.

NOTES,
CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY,
ON THE
Book of Proverbs.

Notes.

CHAPTER I.

1. **THE Proverbs of Solomon**].—The first six verses, as the commentators observe, contain a prefatory introduction to the book, explanatory of the nature and object of the work.—**למשל**, see Prel. Diss.

2. *Respecting the knowledge*].—The construction of this and the two following verses depends upon the first verse, and the prefixed **ל** points out the end and object of the Proverbs, namely, to inculcate most important truths respecting the knowledge of wisdom and instruction, &c. The particle **ל** often signifies *de*, *concerning* or *respecting*, and the infinitive is often put for a noun, and hence the propriety of the version here given. Or, as **ל** with an infinitive frequently supplies the place of the gerunds, the infinitive may be put for the gerund in *do*, when used by the Latins with the preposition *de* preceding it, and rendered “concerning the knowing of wisdom,” &c.—(See Durell’s Critical Remarks.) “By **חכמה** is certainly meant religion, properly so called, or piety towards God, which is wisdom *κατ’ ἐξοχην*.”—(Durell.) **מוסר** *instruction* and *moral discipline* in the largest sense.

— *words of prudence*].—The literal rendering is, “respecting the understanding the words of understanding.”

3. *Instruction in wisdom*—The four last words are genitives of the object, namely, instruction whose object is wisdom, righteousness, judgment, and equity. The meaning therefore is, that these Proverbs relate to the attainment of instruction in these several branches.

4. *To the simple prudence*—פתי, pl. פתאים and פתאים. Though the ancient versions sometimes render this noun in a good sense, and the Arabic فتى is so used, (Golius, p. 1757,) yet, if I mistake not, it always denotes, in the sacred writings, a weak, simple person, destitute of mental energy, and easily deluded. Ch. vii. 7. has been supposed to be an exception.—(Michælis, Suppl. ad Lex. No. 2095; Cocceius, Lex. Heb. ed. Schulz.) It may, undoubtedly, signify *a youth, a young man*, in the place referred to, but its usual sense is equally appropriate, and it is, therefore, unnecessary to depart from it. The distinction of פתי, נבל, and לץ, three words of common occurrence in the Proverbs, is well explained by Michælis.—(Suppl. No. 1304.) “*fatuus, simplex, qui incitia magis quam obfirmatione animi malus est. 2. נבל stultus, multo jam pejor. 3. לץ de cujus emendatione desperare philosophus solet.*”

— ערו properly means *naked, nudus*; but in its metaphorical sense it denotes *quickness of mind*; in a good sense, *discernment, sagacity*; in a bad one, *cunning or subtilty*. I have rendered the fem. ערמה by “*prudence*,” a word more agreeable to the phraseology of the received translation than “*sagacity*,” and sufficiently expressive of its meaning.

It is extremely difficult to affix precise and definite ideas to the several terms which Solomon uses in this account of the subject of the Proverbs. The most arduous part of the translator's office is to render the true import of abstract terms. It is not to be supposed that the wise monarch heaped words together at random, accumulating expressions without

adding to the sense. Such idle verbosity is foreign to the style of the sacred penmen, and cannot be attributed to Solomon, whose high intellectual powers were enlarged and sublimed by the aid of inspiration. In full confidence that the terms in this passage are not tautological, the following attempt to discriminate them, by way of paraphrase, is submitted to the reader. (Ver. 1.) "The Proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel," which treat of (v. 2) "the knowledge of wisdom," of religion and piety towards God, of "instruction" and moral discipline, of "the understanding of the words of prudence;" that is, wise and prudent counsels; (v. 3) which treat of "the attainment of instruction in wisdom," which wisdom is to be exhibited in the conduct of life, and consists "in righteousness," with regard to ourselves, "in judgment," in observing the statutes and ordinances of God, and "in equity" with regard to our fellow-creatures; (v. 4) which treat of "the giving to the simple sagacity" to discover what is right, by supplying them with just principles, and correct views of virtue and vice; and "to the young man knowledge," so that he need not err through ignorance, "and discretion," so that by pondering well these precepts he will not err through wilful obduracy.

5. *The wise will hear*—The wise and prudent are not such as have already attained wisdom, but such as are desirous of doing so.

— *learning*—לִקְחַ is applied, ch. vii. 21, to the alluring and persuasive speech of an harlot: here and ch. iv. 2, ix. 9, xvi. 21, 23, it means "acceptabilis doctrina," (Cocc. Lex.) "doctrina quæ accipitur et acceptatione digna est."—C. B. Michaelis, Notæ Uberiores in Proverbia Salomonis.

— *wise counsels*—חַכְמַלּוּת, in ch. xii. 5, corresponds with מַחְשְׁבוֹת *thoughts*, in the preceding hemistich; and in

Job, xxxvii. 12, it is applied to the counsels and decrees of the Almighty; it therefore means *prudent designs, wise counsels*. In this verse the word is rendered “*acumen*” by Le Clerc, and “*solertiam*” by Dathe.—See Dindorfii Lex. Heb.

6. *By understanding a proverb*—It was customary with the Israelites to employ enigmas and parables in inculcating truths of importance, especially in morality, of which we have many examples in the sacred writings.—(Judges, ix. 8, xiv. 14; 1 Kings, x. 1; 2 Kings, xiv. 9; Eccles. xxxix. 2.) The ancient Greek sages adopted the same method of enforcing moral and important truths: (Burnet, *Archæologiæ*, lib. i. c. 8.) and it is recommended as highly useful and instructive by Clemens Alexandrinus.—(Strom. lib. 2. initio, &c.) It is doubtful whether such enigmas, allegories, and parables are intimated by the terms in this verse, or only the acute sayings and useful aphorisms, by which the wise men of antiquity were accustomed to convey instruction. The general sense, however, is clear, namely, that “a prudent man will attain unto wise counsels” by understanding the maxims and sayings of the wise. I connect this verse with the preceding one, and consider להבין as a gerund; “*intelligendo sententias*.”—Schultens.

— *the interpretation*—מליצה occurs only here and Hab. ii. 6, and Parkhurst derives it from מלץ, and says “it seems to denote *pleasantness, sweetness* of expression, *an elegant saying, a bon mot*;” but this does not well agree with the context in Hab. ii. 6. The ancient versions differ: Aq. Theod. render it by ἐρμηνειαν; Sym. by προελημα; LXX by σκοτωμον λογον; the Vulg. by “*interpretationem*”; Syr. by ܠܕܢܝܐ; and Targ. by the same word, ܐܬܬܐܠܡ, which may mean either *interpretatio* or *sententia allegorica et parabolica*.—(Castell, Buxtorf, *Lex. Talm. et Rab.*) Perhaps it is best to derive the word under consideration from ܠܝܝܠܠ *illudere, deridere*. As

those who taunt and mock use sharp and acute sayings, such as will cut and penetrate, מליצה may mean *a sharp and acute saying*; but in so doubtful a case I have not ventured to alter the received translation.

— *dark sayings*].—"חידה *proprie sermonem involutum et nodosum* designat (חורר enim, Arab. حار est *torsit, inflexit*) quali vetustissinii sapientes suas plerumque solebant obvelare sententias, ne cædem, nimium patescentes, protritæ tandem fierent, atque vilesceant; hinc omnibus aliis etiam accommodatur sententiis prudenter et concinne prolatis, ubi non tam respectus habetur ad obscuritatem, quam ad gravitatem, ut Prov. i. 6; Ps. lxxviii. 2, et li. 1."—Rosenmüller Scholia in Ps. xlix. 5. See also Horsley's Psalms, vol. 1. p. 283, Parkhurst, and Dindorf.

7. *The fear of Jehovah*].—Religion is the foundation of all that is virtuous and honourable in practice, of all that adorns and dignifies man, and therefore Solomon makes it the groundwork of the wisdom he is going to inculcate. יראת יהוה *the fear of Jehovah*, is not that slavish fear which subjects pay to a tyrant; but that pious worship and religious reverence which is due to the Supreme Being; and, if the expression "the fear of the Lord, or Jehovah," had not been too well sanctioned by use to require a change, the original might have been correctly rendered "the reverence of Jehovah." יראת alone is sometimes put for piety, even when the name of God is omitted.

In compliance with the example of some of the most eminent translators, I have rendered the adorable name יהוה by "Jehovah" instead of "Lord," as in the received version. The conceit of Dr. Hales in pronouncing it יאחוא is certainly not deserving of imitation; (Dissertations, p. 125;) though others have preceded him in the same, or nearly the same, pronunciation of it.—(See Dindorfii Lex. Heb. in voc. and

Le Clerc on Exod. iii. 15.) The term *Jehovah* is familiar, and to adopt a different arrangement of the vowels, especially since the true pronunciation of the Hebrew is irrecoverably lost, is useless, if not absurd. “*Usi hic sumus, et alibi semper, voce Jehova, non quod veram hanc esse vocis pronunciationem existimemus; sed quia, cum non satis nota sit, commodius erat voce uti fictâ, nec veris vocalibus instructa, quam voce Dominus, quæ ambigua est.*”—Le Clerc, Comment. in Gen. ii. 4.

— *the principal part of knowledge*]*ראשית* does not here seem to denote the beginning or commencement, but the most excellent or principal part, as Marg. of E. T.; and in this sense the same phrase and sentiment occurs ch. ix. 10; Ps. cxi. 10.—See ch. iv. 7, and note.

— *but fools*]*—*These are persons destitute of true wisdom, who follow their own inclinations without any regard to reason, or reverence for God. In the writings of Solomon, folly and vice are nearly convertible terms; and whatever word expressive of folly is employed, it has reference to moral conduct; as, *כסיל, נבל, אויל, פתי*. It would be well to translate them by different words, but the English language does not admit such variety of expression.

8. *My son, hear, &c.*]*—*It was anciently the custom of preceptors to address their pupils by the title of sons: thus the disciples of the prophets are called “the sons of the prophets,” 1 Kings, xx. 35; 2 Kings, ii. 3, iv. 38; a master, or preceptor is called “a father,” Judges, xvii. 10; 2 Kings, ii. 12; 1 Sam. x. 12. St. Paul styles Timothy “his son,” 1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2. St. John styles those to whom his first Epistle was sent his children, ch. ii. 1, v. 21; and thus the royal sage addresses his young hearers, exhorting them not to condemn the advice and admonition of their parents; because obedience to parents is a duty second

only in importance to obedience to God.—See Pococke, *Notæ in Carmen Togri*, p. 3.

— *And forsake not the precepts*—יורה תורה from ירה, which in Hiph. signifies *to teach, to instruct*; and hence תורה is that which teaches, *a law, a doctrine, a precept*.

9. *a graceful wreath to thy head*—The instruction and admonition of parents will render a man morally amiable and graceful, as necklaces and tiaras give elegance and splendour to the human form: an allusion to the decorations of the head and neck used in the East. Ps. lxxiii. 6; Song of Sol. iv. 9. Compare 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10; 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

10. *consent not*—Instead of תבא, thirty-six MSS. of Kenicott and twenty-two of De Rossi read תאבה, which I have followed after E. T.; nevertheless אל תבא *go not*, yields a good sense.

11. *Let us lay snares*—צפ means *to hide, to conceal*; snares, of course, is understood, and accordingly the Vulg. supplies it, “*abscondamus tendiculas.*”—Waltheri Ellipses Heb. p. 99, ed. Schulz. Halæ, 1782.

— *in vain*—חנם, I think, refers to לנקי *the innocent in rain*, those whose innocence will in vain protect them; but some understand it of those who have done us no injury; and others “*impunc,*” with impunity, there being none to see and avenge it. The LXX render it by ἀδικως, and the Syr. by ܐܠܝܢ “*with guile or fraud.*” Compare 1 Sam. xxv. 31.

12. *as Hades does the living*—Sheol (שׁוֹל) denotes the invisible receptacle of departed souls, as has been evinced by many writers, but perhaps by none with more acuteness and precision than by Dr. Campbell in the sixth Prel. Diss. to his Translation of the Gospels. See ch. xv. 11, note, and the authors there cited. The authorized version of this verse is scarcely intelligible.

— *and whole*—תמימים, I think, means *whole*, *totos*, i. e. as Hades daily swallows up many who were living securely in the midst of health and enjoyment, and not expecting so sudden a fate; so let us swallow them up wholly and instantly; let us consume them altogether, as the grave does its victims. Here is an evident allusion to Numb. xvi. 30. But Geier and Dr. Hodgson refer the word to integrity of life, the latter of whom thus renders the verse :

“ Let us swallow them up, as the tomb does the living,
And the upright, as those who go down into the grave.”

13. *all kinds of valuable treasure*—כל הון יקר, not all valuable treasure, but valuable treasure of all kinds; so Schultens, Michælis, Not. Uber. Dathe, Hodgson.

14. *Cast in thy lot*—This is, probably, an allusion to the custom of freebooters dividing their spoil by lot. “ Let us all have one purse,” i. e. let us all share alike; and whatever each requires shall be supplied out of the common stock.

15. *My son, walk not*—Associate not with them, neither follow their example.

16. *For their feet run to evil*—This verse may undoubtedly mean, that the inclination of sinners is to commit evil and to perpetrate murder; as the same phrase signifies Isaiah, lix. 7: but this and the two following verses may rather be considered as descriptive of the evil consequences of yielding to the seducements of sinners, and as implying that sin generally causes its own punishment. Verse 18 favours this interpretation.

17. *Surely in vain*—When the consequences of sin are so apparent, who would be entangled in its snares? Even the birds of the air, though not eminent for caution and foresight, avoid the destructive net when it is spread in their sight.

— *of any bird*—בעל כנף, literally, “master or lord of wing,” a well-known Hebraism for a bird.—Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 93, ed. Dathe.

19. *Such are the ways*—This is the Parœmiast’s conclusion from his preceding remarks on the evil consequences of yielding to the allurements of sinners. Such, says he, and so pernicious are the ways of those who desire unjust gain: wealth obtained by injustice is the destruction of its possessors. “Sensus est; nemo illorum effugere potest exitium, et inevitabile est Dei judicium adversus avaros et impie quæstuosos.”—Glass, p. 94.

— *unjust gain*—בזע necessarily means *unjust gain* in this place, as there is no condemnation against fair and honest gain. It is used in the same sense 1 Sam. viii. 3; Isaiah, xxxiii. 15; Ezek. xxii. 13, 27, and in other places.

20. *Wisdom crieth without*—Some are of opinion that our Lord Jesus Christ is here characterized by the term “Wisdom;” and that this, and what follows to the end of the chapter, is prophetic of the ministry of Christ during the time of his incarnation, and of the calamities that should come upon the Jews for their rejection of him.—(Dr. Gill’s Bible, Poli Synop.) But it seems rather to be considered as a personification of Wisdom, by which is meant wisdom in moral and divine things, that is, Religion.—(See note on ch. viii. 1.) חכמות here and ch. ix. 1, xxiv. 7; Ps. xlix. 3, is plural, to denote the dignity and eminence of wisdom. For similar instances in other nouns see Glass, Phil. Sac. p. 58 et seq.; Robertson’s Gram. Heb. p. 310. But Simonis (Lex. Heb. in voc.) contends that חכמות has a fem. termination singular, not plural: his reasons, however, do not appear convincing.—See Dindorfii Lex. Heb. in voc.

21. *chief place of concourse*—If חמיות be the true reading, it cannot be better rendered than by our English translators, whom I have followed; but the LXX, Syr. Chald. and Arab. read חמות, “on the top of the walls,” *i. e.* the city walls, or the house-tops.

22. *How long, ye simple*—The simple are those who, being endowed with weak, irresolute minds, are easily led astray; the scorers are those who laugh at religion, and scorn the admonitions of the wise and prudent; the fools are those who are destitute of true wisdom, and pursue the paths of vice. חתהבו is the second person pl. fut.; חמרו is the third person pl. pret.; ישנו is the third person pl. fut.; but such an enallage being inadmissible in English, I have translated them as the second person pl. fut.

23. *my spirit*—By “spirit” some understand the will of God; others the mind, *animum et sensus*; others the divine influence of the Holy Spirit: but, as wisdom is represented as speaking this, it probably means that the scorner and the fool, on turning or reforming at her reproof, shall be endowed with a portion of the spirit of wisdom.—רבֵּרִי *the precepts of wisdom*.

26. *I also will laugh*—I also; namely, I, wisdom.

— *at your calamity*—Parkhurst derives איר from ירה *to throw, to cast*; but better referred to a root of the same letters, as most lexicographers do. In Arabic ايد is *gravis, molestus*.

— *your fear*—A metonymy of the effect for the cause, *i. e.* I will mock when that which causes you terror shall come. So φοβος is used 1 Pet. iii. 14.

28. *Then shall they call*—There is something very striking in the change of the tense from the second to the third person,

significant of the contempt with which wisdom looks down upon sinners. She suddenly starts aside from her harangue to them, and, as if they were too despicable to be any longer in her presence or to be addressed personally, she continues to speak of them in the third person, and to paint in vivid colours the certain misery consequent upon sin.

— *seek me diligently*—יִשְׁחַרְנֵנִי from שָׁחַר *nigrum esse*, hence שָׁחַר *the dawn*, and the verb means *to seek diligently* or *earnestly*, as those may be supposed to do who rise early, and commence their search with the dawn. The Nun in the verbs in this verse is doubled, or rather an epenthetic Nun is inserted.—See Altingii Fundam. Punct. Ling. Sanct. p. 385.

31. *Therefore shall they eat, &c.*—That is, the wicked shall reap the just reward of their transgressions; and the verse may be illustrated by comparing it with ch. xii. 14, xxii. 8; Isaiah, iii. 10; Hosea, x. 13; Job, iv. 8; Gal. vi. 7.

— *shall be sated*—שָׂבַע denotes not only *to fill*, but *to cloy* and *sate*, as is evident from ch. xiv. 14, xxv. 16; Ps. lxxxviii. 4, in Heb. Ps. cxxiii. 3; Isaiah, i. 11, &c. שָׂבַע “h. e. ad nauseam implebuntur et comedent, ita ut consiliorum suorum vehementer tandem, sed nimis sero, ipsos poeniteat.” —Michælis, Notæ Uberiores in Prov.

32. *And the carelessness of fools*—That שָׁלוֹם is taken sometimes in a good sense for *quietness*, *security*, is evident from ch. xvii. 1; Ps. cxxii. 7; but the parallelism shows that it is here applied in a bad sense, for *carelessness* or *indolence*, the too common effect of peace and security. In this latter sense it appears to be used Ezek. xvi. 49.—(See Schultens, Origines Hebrææ, pars. 2. c. iii. § 21. et seq.; Gussetii Comment. in voc.; and compare 2 Chron. xxix. 11; 2 Sam. vi. 7; 2 Kings, iv. 28.) The Syr. and Chald. render it by ܫܠܡܐ

and טוֹעִי, both signifying *error*. Hodgson's version is, "the indifference of fools shall undo them," and Dathe's, "incuria ignavorum eos perdit."

CHAPTER II.

1. *And lay up my commandments*—לִפְנֵי *to lay up*, or reserve for future uses, as in ch. vii. 1, x. 14, xiii. 22. Compare Ps. cxix. 11; Luke, ii. 19, 51; for laying up or treasuring up is a kind of hiding. An allusion, as Dymock observes, to the concealing the most valuable things in *secret* repositories. The personification of wisdom terminates with the preceding chapter, and Solomon now resumes his address to his hearers.

2. *If by inclining, &c.*—The construction of this verse is rather perplexed. כֵּן is probably to be supplied from the first verse, and prefixed to the beginning of this; so Jun. and Tremel. Piscat. Durell. I am induced by the context to adopt this construction, for ver. 1—4 describe the conditions upon which a man may "understand the fear of Jehovah, and find the knowledge of God;" (ver. 5.) Verse 2 should, therefore, be translated with an "if" like the other, as it contains one of the conditions specified. Otherwise it might be literally rendered in connexion with the first verse, "If thou wilt receive my words, and lay up my commandments with thee, (ver. 2,) To incline thine ear unto wisdom; thou shalt apply thine heart to understanding."—לִקְשֹׁב I construe as a gerund.—לֵב the mind, or intellectual part, which the Hebrews frequently denominated "the heart."—Michælis, Suppl. in voc.

3. *Yea, if*—כִּי is not redundant, as some suppose, but means *certe, omnino*.—Noldius, 4.

4. *If thou wilt seek her*—The pronominal affix נָה, I think, refers to חִכְמָה *wisdom*, mentioned ver. 2.

5. *Then shalt thou, &c.*—To seek after religious knowledge is to find it, and to endeavour sincerely and earnestly to become righteous is to succeed.—Matt. vii. 7.

6. *For Jehovah giveth wisdom*—“If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”—James, i. 5. “*דַּת dat, i. e. tradit, docet sapientiam: nam adit in parallelo; מפי ex ore ejus, illo instituentē.*”—Doederlein Scholia in loc.

7. *He layeth up sound wisdom*—חֹשֶׁב occurs in three other places in Proverbs, ch. iii. 21, viii. 14, xviii. 1, and appears in each to mean wisdom. It is derived from יָשָׁה or rather יֵשׁ *est, existit*, and in general means that which is real and substantial; applied to wisdom in particular, it denotes real or sound wisdom. “*Est igitur nomen notionis valde generalis, cujus specialior ex contextu semper definienda est, v. c. Iliob. 6. 13, est spes solida, alibi sapientia solida, &c.*”—(Simonis, Lex. Heb. ed. Eichhorn.) Hence proceeds the variety of the ancient versions. The LXX render it by σωτηριαν; Vulg. by “salutem;” Syr. **ܫܒܗܢ** *spes*; and Targum by שְׁבָהוּר, rendered in the Polyglot “incolumitatem,” but perhaps better “honorem.”—(Castell and Buxtorf, Lex. Talm. in שְׁבָהוּר) Dindorf explains it by *salus, incolumitas*, and adopts Dathe’s translation; “*Hic probis solidam servat fortunam.*”—(Lex. Heb. in voc.) Michælis (Suppl. ad Lex. No. 1066) deduces חֹשֶׁב from the Arabic وَصِي in its origin the same with أَسَا *sanavit, solatus fuit*; and translates it “*medicina, solatium:*” a sense which I cannot find that either יֵשׁ or any of its derivatives ever undoubtedly possesses, and is moreover unsuitable to ch. iii. 21, xviii. 1. But see Michælis, whose explanation is adopted by Schulz in Cocceii Lex. Heb.

8. *By keeping the paths*—If this hemistich be referred to those who walk uprightly in ver. 7, the sense will be as

expressed in the version; but if it be referred to God, it should be rendered,

“ He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly,
Guarding the paths of rectitude;
And (or, for) he preserveth the way of his saints.”

— *rectitude*—משפט, a word of extensive import, here implying every thing just, and right, and equitable; every thing morally good.

9. *Then shalt thou understand, &c.*—It is difficult, as observed before, (ch. i. 4,) to define abstract terms with accuracy; but probably צדק means righteousness as it regards oneself; משפט the judgments and ordinances relating to our duty to God; מישור equity to our neighbours.

11. *Discretion shall watch over thee*—By an elegant personification Discretion and Understanding are represented as watching over the youthful aspirant to virtue, and preserving him from the fascinations of vice. תשמר עליך, a similar phrase, occurs ch. vi. 22; and the image is taken from the custom of military guards, who keep watch for the safety and tranquillity of the city.

12. *the way of the wicked*—The LXX, Vulg. Syr. Targ. Pagn. Merc. Geier, Le Clerc, Dathe render מדרך דע “*from the evil way*,” but the parallelism requires רע to be taken as a noun of multitude for the base in general, corresponding with the latter hemistich.

— *From every one that speaketh perverse things*—מאיש “*from every one*,” because all the verbs which follow are plural.—(Durell, Michælis, Not. Uber.) הפך תהפכות from הִפְךָ *vertere*, hence the noun means things turned; *tortuous, distorted, perverse things*.

15. *in their ways*—ב is to be supplied before ארחותיהם. The ם in this word is what grammarians call the “Jod multitudinis.”—Schroeder, Gram. Heb. p. 218; Storr, Observationes ad Analog. et Syntax. Heb. p. 111, note.

16. *To deliver thee from the wanton*—The construction of this verse depends upon ver. 11. Discretion shall watch over thee, Understanding shall preserve thee, in order to deliver thee from the blandishments of meretricious beauty.

—*from the wanton*—אשה זרה, literally, *a strange or foreign woman*; נכריה, literally, the same; both signifying *a lewd woman, a harlot*.

That the greatest number of courtezans in Palestine were women from foreign countries is probable, both from their impurer and more licentious manners, and from the Hebrew appellations which imply a foreign extraction. Though the laws respecting virginity, and the command that “there shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel,” (Deut. xxiii. 17; Levit. xix. 29,) sufficiently attest that every breach of chastity was displeasing to God; yet Prov. ii. 17, (see note,) the descent of Jephthah from an harlot, (Judges, xi. 1,) Solomon’s decision of the cause of the two harlots, (1 Kings, iii. 16,) the case of Tamar, (Gen. xxxviii. 12,) and the propensity of human nature to sensual pleasure, which neither laws nor education can wholly suppress, afford a proof that some among the Jewish women addicted themselves to this debauched manner of life. Some, however, suppose that by the laws in Deut. and Levit. above cited, “non scorta vulgaris quæstus aut voluptatis solius cupidine corporum suorum copiam facientia, prohibentur; sed *scorta* (quæ vocant) *sacra*, foedo alicui Gentium Numini dicata, et turpitudinem omnem in illius honorem exercentia.”—(Spencer, de Leg. Hebræor. lib. ii. cap. 22.) Among the Athenians severe penalties were laid upon those who defiled women that were citizens of

Athens, while foreigners had the liberty of keeping public stews, and therefore harlots there, like those among the Jews, were called *ξεναι*, *strange women*.—Potter, Ant. lib. iv. cap. 12.

It must be owned that the Jewish law did not circumscribe the gratification of the sexual passion within the same limits as the Christian religion does. Polygamy was, perhaps, permitted by the law of Moses; certainly it was practised under it.—(Michælis, Commentaries on the Law of Moses, Art. 94.) An Hebrew might take his slaves or handmaids to his bed, though they became thereby his concubines, a kind of inferior wives.—(Selden, de Jure Nat. et Gent. lib. v. cap. 7, and de Success. in Bon. Def. cap. 3; Michælis, Commentaries, Art. 88; Parkhurst, Lex. שִׁבְיָה; and Exod. xxi. 7.) Under certain restrictions he was permitted to have carnal intercourse with a captive woman taken in war.—(Deut. xxi. 10—14; Selden, de Jure Nat. et Gent. lib. v. cap. 13.) While such an extensive indulgence of the passions was allowed to the Israelites, there was no room for the restrictions enforced by the Gospel: yet many circumstances concur to prove that these permissions were only granted to the hardness of their hearts, and were to be withdrawn at the introduction of a more spiritual law. If a Jew violated a virgin, he was compelled to marry her: (Deut. xxii. 28.) If he enticed a maid and lay with her, he was obliged either to marry her, or to give her a dowry; for there is some doubt about the meaning of this law.—(Exod. xxii. 16; Selden, Uxor Hebraica, lib. i. cap. 16.) Prostitution was certainly prohibited in the one sex, and, the crime being nearly the same, they must, by parity of reason, have considered concubinage as prohibited in the other. Besides, every commandment of the Decalogue must be understood to condemn, not only the extreme crime which it expressly prohibits, but every inferior degree of the same kind; (Graves' Lectures on the Pentateuch, part 2, lect. 2;) every gratification,

therefore, out of the limits prescribed by the law must have been condemned by the commandment "thou shalt not commit adultery." The inspired writings of the subsequent prophets and teachers often throw the greatest light upon the Levitical code; and the Proverbs of Solomon may be considered as the most valuable commentary upon the laws against prostitution; showing to what extent they were to be understood, by condemning every act of illicit indulgence.

It may be observed that this passage is interpreted by Gersom of the sensitive appetite, by Jarchi of idolatry, and by others of all false doctrine: but surely, if there be any dependence to be placed upon the language of the sacred writer, any propriety in his expressions, it is to be understood in its literal sense, as a warning against the seduction of harlots. The spirit of allegorical interpretation may make the Scriptures speak whatever is prompted by the wildest fancy, or the deepest fanaticism. Neither do the terms נכריה and זונה denote a woman of debauched manners, whether married or unmarried, as many commentators suppose; but only an *unmarried woman* addicted to an impure way of life.—See the note ch. vi. 26.

I cannot better apologize for the length of this note than by adopting the words of the celebrated Porson. "Si quis me nunc accusabit, quod hanc notam longam et tædii plenam fecerim, habebit, quod est accusatori maxime optandum, contentum reum. Verum uno exemplo ostendere volebam, quantam mihi lectores, non quidem ob ea, quæ dixi, sed ob ea certe, quæ tacui, gratiam debeant."—Addend. ad Hecubam.

17. *the guide of her youth*—By this expression some understand God, some a husband, and some a father or guardian. It probably means the last, as a father or guardian is the natural protector of youthful beauty, whom, nevertheless, the wanton forsakes.

— *the covenant of her God*—Dathe, to whom Schultz accedes, (Cocc. Lex. אלהיה,) thinks that אלהיה means *her husband*, because had God been meant, the pronominal affix would have been omitted; but אלהיה with the fem. affix is used when God is meant Hosea, xiii. 16, in Heb.; Zephaniah, iii. 2; and “the covenant of God” is most naturally interpreted of God’s covenant with the Israelitish nation. If this exposition be admitted, the harlot mentioned in the preceding verse must have been of Jewish extraction. Should it be deemed erroneous, I would take “the covenant of her God” for the marriage-covenant, because God first instituted marriage, and still sanctions it as a solemn contract, the violation of which is highly criminal.

18. *unto the dead*—For some excellent remarks on the origin and meaning of רפאים, see Mede, Disc. 7; Peters, Crit. Diss. on Job, p. 318 et seq.; Magee on Atonement, vol. ii. p. 161 et seq.

20. *Therefore walk*—According to this version, the verse constitutes an inference from the preceding discourse. למען sometimes means *ideo, therefore*, (Noldius, 3,) and so it is rendered by the Syriac. But the verse may, perhaps, be more grammatically translated in reference to ver. 11; that is, Discretion and Understanding shall preserve thee, in order that thou mayst walk in the way of the good, &c. So Le Clerc, Geier, and others.

21. *shall remain in it*—So the ancient versions render יותר; but Schultens translates it by “nervabuntur,” referring it to the Arabic وتر *tetendit arcum*, hence وتر *nervus, chorda*, and so the Heb. יתר. But the Arabic word has various senses, (see Golius, p. 2614,) and which shall we choose? Besides, I doubt whether the notion of *strength* and *pith*, which, I suppose, is intended by the uncouth word

“*nervabuntur*,” or of *excellence*, which the word does, undoubtedly, sometimes signify, can enter into its meaning here. It simply implies that the upright, so far from entering the ways which lead to death, shall enjoy long life on the earth, in contradistinction to the wicked, who “shall be cut off from the earth.”—(Ver. 22.)

CHAPTER III.

1. *my doctrine*—חורתי. See ch. i. 8.

— *my precepts*—מצות *a command* or *precept*, from צוה *to command, to ordain, to prescribe*; and נצר, which occurs about twenty-five times in Proverbs, is *to keep or observe that which is commanded*.

2. *and peace*—By “*peace*” temporal felicity may be meant; or that peace of mind which accrues from virtuous conduct; the satisfaction which arises from an approving conscience.

3. *Let not mercy and truth*—The imagery here introduced seems to be taken, at least in part, from Deut. vi. 8. The abstract terms “*mercy*” and “*truth*” are, probably, to be understood in the most general sense, for every thing that can come under these appellations. But see Poli Synop. and ch. vi. 21, and note.

— *the table of thine heart*—This expression, which occurs Jerem. xvii. 1; Prov. vii. 3; 2 Cor. iii. 3, is, no doubt, an allusion to the tables upon which the ten commandments were written by the finger of God; and to “*write them upon the table of the heart*,” denotes to give them due attention, and to infix them deeply in the mind, so as never to be forgotten. Similar expressions are common among profane authors, as may be seen in Biel, Thesaurus, γραφω; Clemens Rom. § 2, ed. Coteller, not. 23; Le Clerc, Ars. Crit. part. 2. sect. 1. c. 4.

4. *And thou shalt find*—מצא, the imperative for the future.

— *favour and kindness*—שכל cannot here have its usual signification of *wisdom* or *prudence*, but must mean either *good success*, as the root signifies, Deut. xxix. 9; Josh. i. 7; Prov. xvii. 8, and as E. T. Marg. and Durell render it; or *kindness, benevolence*, as it is rendered by Cocceius, Doederlein, Dathe; and though I cannot find any other undoubted application of it in this sense, yet, as it is easily deducible from the former sense, good success and prosperity often producing kindness, and as it seems to be required by the context, I have not scrupled to adopt it.—See ch. xvii. 8, note.

6. *In all thy ways acknowledge him*—In every action and business of life acknowledge the superintending care and protection of Providence, and do all things to his glory; and he will conduct thee to the paths of happiness and virtue.

7. *Be not wise in thine own eyes*—That is, Be not puffed up with a vain conceit of thy own importance, thy knowledge, and sagacity.—Compare Rom. xii. 16; 1 Cor. viii. 2; Gal. vi. 3.

8. *It shall be a healing medicine*—The efficacy of piety and reformation is here compared to the healing and balsamic virtues of medicine applied to a diseased body. Though thou art distempered with sin, spiritually sick and diseased, so that from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head there is no soundness in thee, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores, yet they will be bound up by the fear of Jehovah, they will be mollified with the ointment of piety and religion, and thou wilt be restored to pristine health and vigour. “It is a comparison,” says Sir John Chardin, “drawn from the plasters, ointments, oils, frictions, which are made use of in the East, upon the belly and stomach in most maladies; they being ignorant in the villages of the art of making decoc-

tions and potions, and the proper doses of such things, generally make use of external medicines."—Quoted in Harmer's Observations, vol. iv. p. 417, ed. Clarke, Lond. 1808.

— *and a lotion*]— $\eta\rho\omega$ occurs Hos. ii. 7, Heb.; Psalm, cii. 10, Heb. where it undoubtedly means *liquors* or *drink*; but its derivation from $\pi\rho\omega$ *to wet, to moisten*, the parallelism, and the consistency of the imagery, show that it implies in this passage some species of medicine, *a lineament, a lotion*; i. e. a liquid externally applied. The LXX have $\epsilon\pi\mu\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\alpha$ *curatio*, probably in the same sense. "Nec negari potest vocem $\epsilon\pi\mu\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\alpha$ sat bonum sensum fundere, et bene convenire hebraico $\eta\rho\omega$, *aspersio, irrigatio, seu id, quod corpori robur ac vires dat*. Nam inter alia *curationem, sanationem* notat, quemadmodum $\epsilon\pi\mu\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ \ddot{u} dicuntur, *qui agrotos et vulneratos curant*."—Schleusner, Opuscula, p. 269. Compare Biel, Thesaurus in voc.

9. *Honour Jehovah with thy substance*—Give of thine abundance to the poor; pay thy tithes and oblations; and offer the first-fruits of thy produce, as the law directs.—Exod. xxiii. 19; Deut. xxvi. 2, et seq.

11. *the chastening of Jehovah*]— $\mu\sigma\kappa\epsilon\rho$ not only means *doctrine* and *instruction*, but likewise *restraint, correction*; and might, in most cases, be adequately rendered by *discipline*; but as the authorized version expresses the sense with sufficient correctness, it would be unwarrantable to alter its phrasology.—See Job, v. 17; Deut. xiii. 5; James, i. 2; Rev. iii. 19.

12. *And chasteneth the son*]—That our standard version, "even as a father the son in whom he delighteth," may be grammatically extracted from the Hebrew, no one will deny; yet I have adopted a different translation for the following reasons: 1. The verb $\כָּאֵב$ *to grieve*, though intransitive, will

become transitive in Pihel, i. e. *to correct, to chasten*; and, by a small alteration of the points, changing the Masoretic punctuation *keab* into *kieeb*, it will admit this sense. 2. The LXX took it for a verb, and render it by *μαστιγοῦ*. 3. The inspired author of the Epistle to the Hebrews quotes this passage in the words of the LXX, *μαστιγοῦ δε πάντα υἱον ὃν παρὰ δεχεται*, (ch. xii. 6,) i. e. “scourgeth every son whom he receiveth,” namely, receiveth into favour, equivalent to the Heb. *יִרְצֶה*, “in whom he delights.” I cannot believe that any passage of the O. T. is misunderstood by the inspired writers of the N. T., whether it be cited as prophetic, or by way of accommodation. They may not, indeed, have given an exact literal version, as is often the case, in consequence, most likely, of their generally quoting the LXX, as being the received version of the Scriptures into the language in which they wrote; but still they exhibit the true sense. How much soever they may have neglected critical subtleties and nice grammatical distinctions, I cannot believe that the Holy Spirit, by which they were inspired, would suffer them to misinterpret the words of inspiration. At least, it seems preferable to bow to the authority of an apostle, rather than to a commentator or critic of modern times. On the subject of quotations, besides the well known works of Surenhusius, Randolph, and Owen, the reader may consult, with great advantage, Horne’s Introduction to the Critical study of the Scriptures, vol. i. p. 495—528. 4. The parallelism requires the latter hemistich *to* be rendered “And chasteneth,” &c. in order to correspond with the former. Heb. xii. 5, et seq. is an admirable comment upon this passage of Proverbs.

13. *that getteth understanding*—The genealogy of the senses attached to *פִּק* may be thus arranged. Its primary meaning may be *to draw out*, Isa. lviii. 10. In this sense the Chald. *נִפֵּק* and the Syr. *ܢܦܩ* in Aphel are used. 2. *To*

obtain, i. e. to draw out from another, to draw forth something for one's own use, as drawing out the precious metals from the bowels of the earth, or riches from a treasury.—(Prov. viii. 35, xii. 2, xviii. 22.) 3. *To totter, to stumble*; to wit, drawn out of the straight course, drawn aside.—(Isaiah, xxviii. 7.) Schulz, in the true spirit of an Arabizing critic, refers פֶּסֶק to the Arabic فاق *“altum esse, hinc; superare, indeque de qualibet abundantia:”* but there does not appear to be the most remote affinity between them in signification, as any one must be convinced by consulting the Arabic Lex.: nevertheless, Michælis and Simonis coincide with Schulz.

14. *For the merchandise, &c.*—That is, it is better to get wisdom than riches. So LXX, κρησσον γαρ αὐτην ἰμπορευεσθαι, ἢ χρυσιον καὶ ἀργυριον θησαυρους.

15. *than gems*—After reading the remarks of Bochart, Michælis, Parkhurst, &c. on פְּנִינִים, I remain quite unsatisfied; I have, therefore, chosen to give a general signification to the term, in imitation of LXX, Syr. Targ. Schultens, Dathe.

— *And all the things thou canst desire*—כָּל חֲפָצֶיךָ, literally, “all thy desirable or delectable things.” There does not appear a shadow of a reason for rendering it, here and ch. viii. 11, “monilia,” as Schultens does.

16. *Length of days is in her right hand*—“Wisdom is here represented as a queen, holding in one hand, instead of a sceptre, length of days; and in the other, instead of a globe, riches and honour.”—Burder's *Oriental Customs* in loc. So Poli Synop. and Gill.

— *riches and honour*—Possibly spiritual riches; but more probably temporal advantages and prosperity, as more agreeable to the religious opinions of the ancient Jews.—See Prel. Diss.

18. *She is a tree of life*—The phrase עץ חיים *tree of life*, occurs ch. xi. 30, xiii. 12, xv. 4. An evident allusion to the “tree of life” in the garden of Eden; intimating that wisdom, or religion, is equally salutiferous with the paradisaical tree of life.

— *And happy is every one*—“The construction our version gives to the last hemistich,” says Durell, “is unjustifiable, as it joins a singular to a plural, besides the enallage of numbers it creates between the two sentences in the verse: I would therefore render it, ‘And she guides (or, directs) them that retain her;’ the ך formative of the feminine being by some accident dropped out of the text.” But nothing is more common than for a verb singular to be construed with a noun plural, as every Hebrew scholar is aware, when meant distributively; (Glass, p. 328, Robertson’s Gram. p. 321;) and though Dimock observes, that “we do not find the sing. part. of this verb (מאשר) with a plur. noun elsewhere,” no very surprising circumstance, considering the paucity of Hebrew writings; yet this can be no valid objection, as such a construction is usual, and is required by the parallelism, and is supported by the ancient versions. Our established version is therefore correct; accordingly I have adopted it.

19. *Jehovah by wisdom*—It is obvious that wisdom cannot, in this place, be equivalent to religion, as it usually is in the writings of Solomon; but that it means the infinite wisdom and goodness of God. From contemplating the excellence of wisdom in man, the transition is natural to the wisdom of the Deity, as manifested in the works of the creation. “He hath made the earth by his power; he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his understanding.”—(Jer. x. 12, li. 15.) Who can contemplate the wonderful works of Omniscient Power; their variety and

beauty; their magnitude and grandeur; their nice adjustment and adaptation to each other, so that nothing is wanting, nothing redundant, nothing superfluous; and not exclaim, in the words of the Psalmist, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all."—(Ps. civ. 24.) The eloquence of Cicero is unequal to do justice to this ennobling subject, *De Nat. Deor.* lib. ii. § 38, et seq.

Some interpret this verse in reference to the second Person in the Trinity, corresponding with the Hypostatic Wisdom described in the eighth chapter. Nothing, either in the context or language, absolutely militates against this interpretation, and it may be thought even to derive much support from the circumstance, that Solomon does actually designate the Divine Logos by the title of Wisdom; (ch. viii. 22;) nevertheless, as the wisdom here mentioned is not accompanied with any of those personal characters which so strongly point out a real, subsisting being in the eighth chapter, it cannot be adopted without much hesitation,

20. *By his knowledge the depths are broken up*—חֲדָוּת most commonly signifies *a collection of waters, the sea*; and so it does in three other places in Proverbs, ch. viii. 24, 27, 28. By the breaking up of the depths we are, probably, to understand the dispersion of the waters over the terraqueous globe in fountains, and rivers, and fertilizing showers.—(Poli Synop.) But it may refer to the first creation of the seas.—(Gen. i. 9, 10; Prov. viii. 27—29; Job, xxxviii. 8.) In this case נִבְקַע may be translated "burst forth;" "by his knowledge the depths burst forth," *i. e.* the dry land and the waters were separated, "*effissæ sunt*," as it is rendered by some in Poli Synop. Cocceius, and Schultens. So the Syriac and Chaldee: *ἄβυσσος ἐρρηγμένη*, LXX; "*eruperunt abyssi*," Vulgate.

21. *let not these things depart*—Geier thinks יָלוּ refers to wisdom and discretion in the second clause, and Hodgson

transposes the two hemistichs; but as a *mas. verb.* should not be made unnecessarily to concord with nouns *fem.* it is better to refer it to the things preceding, *i. e.* let not those things which I have been observing depart from thine eyes, but keep them ever in view.

22. *And an ornament*—יָרָן, a metonymy of the effect for the cause, *i. e.* that which procures favour or kindness.—Ch. i. 9.

23. *Then shalt thou, &c.*—Guided by wisdom, thou wilt pass thy days in security and comfort; and in all thy intercourse with the world thou wilt be safe from falling into sin, even as the traveller who journeys by the light of the sun proceeds on his way securely.

24. *When thou liest down*—אִם may be rendered “if,” as LXX, Vulg. Targ. and many modern translators, or, with Schultens, “sane decumbes.” Durell thinks it improbable that Solomon would use the same word twice (שָׁכַב) in the same verse; but there is no authority from MSS. to alter the text; and the ancient versions, to which he appeals, do not bear him out; for it by no means follows, that the ancient translators had a different reading in their texts, because they use two different words in the two clauses.

26. *thy confidence*—The primary meaning of כֹּחַ appears to be *torpere, iners esse*; hence it denotes, 1st. *Strength, support*, as the *loins* and *flanks*.—(Levit. iii. 4, 10, 15, iv. 9, vii. 4; Ps. xxxviii. 7. Bochart, Hieroz. p. 1. lib. ii. cap. 45.) 2ly. “*Hope, confidence*, what a man depends upon, as the loins are the strength of the body.”—(Taylor’s Concordance.) 3ly. “*In a mental sense, to be stupid*, or, as it were, *stiff, rigid or insensible, in mind or understanding*.”—(Parkhurst.) It also signifies *a star or constellation*; but how this sense descended from the radical meaning is difficult to discover.

The ב in בַּכֶּסֶלֶךְ is not redundant; but denotes a particular emphasis, namely, Jehovah shall be, in an eminent manner, the object of thy confidence.—(See Storr, *Observat. ad Anal. et Syntax*, p. 451.) The Arabians prefix ب *Ba*, in the same way to nouns.—Schultens in *Job*, p. 640, and *Conces. Haririi*. iv. p. 41, not. 82.

— *from being taken*].—"scil. in foveis aut laqueis, quos tibi struxerunt impii."—Michælis, *Notæ Ueberiores*.

27. *the indigent*].—Literally, "its owners or possessors," i. e. those who ought to become the possessors of good, though they are in want of it; in other words, the indigent: *ܝܢܕܢ*, LXX; "egentibus," Dathe, *Glass*, p. 94, *Aben Ezra*, *Cocc. Schult. Michæl. Poli Synop.*

— *in the power of thy hand*].—On the phrase *לֹא יִדְּךָ* see *Parkhurst, Lex.* לֹא, 8; *Hale's Dissertations*, p. 150; *Rosenmuller on Micha*, ii. 1; *Michælis, Suppl. ad Lex. Heb.* in לֹא.

29. *in security by thee*].—The Syriac is, "Devise not evil against thy neighbour (*ܕܠܐ ܥܡܠܐ ܕܡܠܝܚܐ*?) dwelling (or, when he dwells) with thee in peace." So *Targ.* "Est gravis perfidiæ genus hominem innocentia confidentem, et amice se gerentem, dissimulatione adhibita, perdere."—*Le Clerc*.

30. *Contend not, &c.*].—Our standard version is, "Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm," which is objectionable, because it implies, if a man has done us harm, we ought to contend with him, which in some cases is necessary, but is not likely to form a general precept; and because it gives to the word *בַּמַּל* the sense of *doing* or *performing*, which it seems never to bear, but always that of *returning*, *requiting*, or *recompensing*.—(*Parkhurst in voc.*) The true sense of the precept is, that unprovoked attack

brings merited punishment upon the head of the aggressor. If you contend with a man without cause, he will, in revenge, reward you evil. If, however, the authorized version should be deemed preferable to the one here presented, the sense will be, that we ought not to contend with a man, unless he has first given just cause of offence. “Sensus est, non esse litem intendendam homini, etiam plebeio, et parum timendo, sine causa, et nisi injuriâ prior laccessiverit.”—Le Clerc.

— *Surely*—לֹא אֵין often means *certe, profecto*.—Noldius, 1.

31. *the oppressor*—אִישׁ חָמָס, a man whose conduct is violent, rapacious, and unjust; an oppressor. The expression occurs ch. xvi. 29; 2 Sam. xxii. 49; Ps. xviii. 48, cxl. 1, 4, 11.

32. *But his intercourse*—That סֹר has the sense of *familiar* and *friendly intercourse* is evident from Ps. lv. 14; Job, xix. 19, xxix. 4.—(See Cocc. Lex. and Rosenmulleri Scholia in Ps. xxv. 14.) Applied to the Supreme Being, it denotes that spiritual intercourse which the pious have with him, when he kindly protects them, imparts his counsels, and deals with them as with sons. So it is to be understood Amos, iii. 7; Ps. xxv. 14, which Rosenmuller thus translates, “*Familiaris Jovæ consuetudo cum illis, qui ipsum colunt, cum his Jovæ familiariter agit, consilia sua, tanquam amicis, eis communicat, quum contra impii in Jovam ab ejus consuetudine et notitia longissime absunt.*” To the same purpose Dathe explains it. סֹר then, in the verse before us, means God’s kind treatment of and familiar intercourse with his saints; or, as Dathe’s version is, “*Probis vero est familiaris.*”

In appealing to Arabic, critics are much divided; some referring to סֹר *سَد*, as Parkhurst; some to *وَسَد*, as Michælis; some to *سَاد*, as Rosenmuller.—(See also Cocceii Lex. ed.

Schulz, and Simonis, Lex. ed. Eichhorn.) Whoever will take the trouble to examine the respective derivations of the word proposed by these learned men, and to trace them to their sources, will probably be of opinion, that biblical knowledge is not likely to be much improved by the dialect of Arabia.

34. *Surely he scorneth, &c.*—The version of the LXX is, Κυριος υπερηφανους ἀντιτασσεται, ταπεινους δὲ ἐδώκε χάριν, the Lord resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble; and it is cited by James, iv. 6, and by Peter, 1 Ep. v. 5, with the single exception of Θεος being substituted for Κυριος. “The apostle’s quotation of this passage, though somewhat different in the words, is the same in the sense with the original. For *scorners*, in Scripture, are *proud, insolent, wicked men*: and to resist such persons, by rendering their schemes abortive, and by humbling them, is emphatically called *a scorning of them*.”—Macknight.

35. *But shame shall exalt fools*—It shall bring them into the most conspicuous disgrace, as Dimock expresses it. Schultens, who derives נָבֵל from נָבֵל *ussit, torruit*, thinks here is an allusion to the stigmata imprinted upon the body, and translates the clause, “et elumbes nobilitat inustio infamia,” adding, in a note, “Gravis et sententiosa oppositio; perquam et *stolidis sua* assignatur *hæreditas præclara*, ad posteror prodenda, ac propaganda, *infamia semper duratura*, per quam ipsi quoque suo more, meritissimoque jure, *nobilitentur*.” The Jews were forbid to inflict stigmata upon their bodies, but it was customary among the surrounding idolatrous nations, as well as among the Greeks and Romans.—(Levit. xix. 28; Potter’s Ant. of Greece, lib. i. cap. 10; Spencer, de Leg. Heb. lib. ii. cap. 14, where the subject is treated with immense erudition.) But, whether there be any allusion to these stigmata

or not, the sense is clearly as explained above: so Hodgson renders the clause, "But disgrace shall lift fools to notice;" and Dathe, "Stulti infamiam sunt famosi."

CHAPTER IV.

1. *of a father*—*i. e.* a teacher or instructor.—Ch. i. 8, note.

3. *For I was a son very dear to my father*—Durell, Le Clerc, Hodgson, Dathe connect יָרֵךְ *tender, tenderly loved, dear*, with בֶּן *a son*, and the ancient versions, probably, adopted the same construction; I have, therefore, followed it.—Compare 2 Chron. xxii. 5, xxix. 1.

— *And well-beloved*—As Bathsheba had more sons than Solomon, (2 Sam. v. 14; 1 Chron. iii. 5,) יָחִיד cannot mean *only, unicus*, but *well-beloved*, as Gen. xxii. 2, 12: ἀγαπώμενος, LXX.

4. *He taught me also*—It cannot be doubted that David, a man so eminent for his deep contrition, and his zeal for the service and honour of God, would carefully instruct his son in the doctrines and duties of religion; and some instances of his pious admonitions are recorded 1 Kings, ii. 2; 1 Chron. xxii. 12, xxviii. 9. Happy are they who have been well instructed and disciplined by parental care and example!

— *and thou shalt live*—וַחַיִּה, imperative for the future, *i. e.* thou shalt enjoy a long and happy life; for Solomon, like the Jewish legislator, only uses temporal sanctions in enforcing his precepts.—(See Prel. Diss.) In the same way we are to understand ch. iii. 2, vii. 2, viii. 35, ix. 11, x. 27, &c. Verse 10 of this chapter shows that Solomon is speaking only of temporal life and happiness.

5. *Forget not this*—This version coincides with E. T. which, however, is not quite perspicuous. The pronominal

affix, or חרבר הזה *this thing*, must be supplied after אל השכח. Hodgson and others render the clause, “Forget not, neither turn from the words of my mouth;” but the particle מ מאמרי is an objection to this construction.

7. *Wisdom is the principal thing*—Wisdom, being the principal thing, ought to be acquired, even at the expense of every other possession, if necessary. It is a goodly pearl of great price, and a prudent man will sell all that he hath, and purchase it.—(Matt. xiii. 45.) Others think the sense is, among, or together with thy other possessions get wisdom, without which they are useless, if not injurious. There is an elegant paronomasia in the original, which our translators have endeavoured to preserve at the expense of perspicuity.

From this verse it may be gathered, that ראשית here and ch. i. 8, ix. 10, is correctly rendered “the principal part or thing,” not “the beginning;” since it would be absurd to say “the beginning of wisdom *is this*; get wisdom;” for the acquirement of wisdom cannot be the beginning of it; but it is highly proper to say, that as wisdom is the principal thing, therefore obtain it. That ראשית does often signify *the principal* or *most excellent* and *chief part* or *thing*, see Numb. xxiv. 20; 1 Sam. ii. 29; Job, xl. 19; Jer. xlix. 35; Amos, vi. 1, 6. Compare ch. ix. 10, and note.

8. *Esteem her*—The variety of renderings of סלסל, occurring only here, is truly astonishing: περιχαράκωσον αὐτην, LXX; ἀγαλαξέ, Aq.; βᾶσταζε, Sym.; “arripe illam,” Vulg.; חבביה “love her,” Targ. Syr.; “attolle vel exalta eam,” Aben Ezra, Munst. Pagn. Merc. Mont. E. T.; “extolle,” Jun. Trem. Piscat. Car.; “viam ejus munito,” Le Clerc; “effer eam,” Michael. Not. Ub.; “suscipe illam,” Houbigant; “circumflectitor eam,” Schult.; “junge tibi eam,” Dathe; “magnify her,” Hodgson. It may be referred to the root סלל *to raise, to elevate*; hence, mentally, *to raise* or *elevate any thing in one’s esteem; to prefer, to extol*.—(Exod. ix. 17;

Ps. lxxviii. 4; Taylor's Concord.) The kindred dialects afford no assistance. Schultens, indeed, refers סלסל to the Arabic سلسل *connexuit, concutenavit*, with which it appears to have no affinity in meaning; and Michælis refers it to شال *elevavit*, but the propriety of this reference may be questioned. Gousset inclines to derive it from סל *a basket*, and to translate it, “‘eam in corbe ponito,’ allusione vel ad canistra sacra, vel ad canistra colligentium fructus.”—Lex. Heb. in סלסל.

9. *deliver to thee*—The LXX and Vulg. render תמננך by *υπερασπιση* and “proteget,” probably connecting it with מנן *a shield*, from גנן *to protect*; but analogy requires that it should be referred to a separate root, מנן, as Gen. xiv. 20; Hosea, xi. 8, which last fixes its meaning to that of *giving*; but whether it includes the sense of giving gratis, (in Arab. Syr. and Chald. it signifies *gratis*,) or of giving largely and profusely, is very doubtful.—See Schultens in loc. and Parkhurst's Lex.

12. *shall not be straitened*—לא יצר might, perhaps, be more correctly rendered, “thy march shall not be impeded.” צור *to bind, to straiten, to distress*; applied to steps or walking, *to impede*: “thy steps shall not be impeded.”—(Hodgson, Le Clerc.) The sense is, “Quicquid agas vel suscipias extra periculum erit et afflictionem; et vel si summa diligentia et festinatione id feceris, non ideo infeliciter succedet, si sapientiam ducem sequares”—Merc.

13. *thy life*—The cause of a long and prosperous life to thee. The pronouns ה and היא refer to חכמה *wisdom*, mentioned above, as Buxtorf observes (Thesaurus, p. 414.)

16. *For they sleep not, unless, &c.*—This is very similar to Virgil's expression, “Et si non aliqua nocuisses, mortuus esses;” and Juvenal's,

“Ergo non aliter poterit dormire; quibusdam
Somnum rixa facit.”

17. *For they eat &c.*—Many commentators understand this of food and wine gained by iniquity and violence; but it strikes me as a figurative way of expressing the great delight the wicked have in their base and disgraceful deeds. They cannot sleep unless they have done mischief; for if they have committed no trespass, if they have done no deed of violence, they are deprived of their highest gratification, and sleep is banished from their eyes.—See Poli Synop. and Schultens.

18. *But the path of the righteous, &c.*—The imagery in this verse is taken from the dawn, which, by degrees, leads on to perfect daylight; and the sense is, The path of the righteous is glorious and honourable; the further it is pursued, it opens to scenes of still brighter prospects, as the morning dawn increases in splendour, till it ends in the full blaze of day. Some think that a future state is here intimated, and that this passage “beautifully expresses the reward of virtue, increasing from day to day, until it terminates in endless glory;” (Graves on the Pent. vol. ii. p. 252;) but this is the interpretation of a Christian, not of a Jew of the Solomonic era.

— *light of the dawn*—נבה signifies *the dawn, aurora*; (Isa. lx. 3, lxii. 1;) so נאֶר and נֶאֱרָא, in Syriac, is *the dawn, crepusculum, aurora*.—(Castell.) See Michael. Sup. No. 1514, and Schultens, who renders it “at iter justorum ut lux jubaris Orientis;” or, as Merc. renders it, “velut lux auroræ.” It may, however, be referred to אורח, and rendered, “The path of the righteous is splendid as the light;” “justorum via instar lucis splendet,” Dathe and many in Poli Synop. after the LXX.

— *which shineth more and more*—הולך ואור, literally, *going and shining*; a common Hebraism for shining more and more. Other examples may be seen in Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 274, ed. Dathe.

— *until perfect day*]
נכון a participial noun, from כון *to prepare, to establish*, and ער נכון היח denotes to the full establishment of day, or until perfect day, *i. e.* till the dawn ends and the day begins.—(See Rosenmuller, Scholia in Hosea, vi. 3.) Those who consider the phrase to mean *mid-day*, impair, if they do not completely destroy, the imagery. Besides, though the day increases in heat, the light does not shine more and more till the meridian. Duport, however, in his metrical Greek version of the Proverbs, has adopted and elegantly expressed this idea.

Οἱ δ' ἡελίου ἀγλὴ πέλῃ οὐρανὸν προ,
 Ὄφρα κεν ἥως ἡ, τὸ δὲ γίνεται αἰὲν ἐφ' ὥρας
 Λαμπροτερον τε φᾶος, καὶ ἀέξεται ἱερὸν ἡμῶν,
 Ἐἰως ἡελίος μεσὸν οὐρανὸν ἀμφιέβηκε,
 Στελεῶν ἀγλαίῃ· τοιῇ οἶδος ἐστὶ δικαίων.

Namely,—“As at morn the sun darts its beams in the heavens, but the light becomes each moment brighter, and the day advances, till the sun has attained its meridian, effulgent in splendour; such is the path of the righteous.”

19. *The way of the wicked, &c.*—While the path of the righteous is honourable and full of light, that of the wicked is through thick darkness, in which they cannot discern the objects over which they stumble. A figurative description of the unexpected calamities and certain misery which await the wicked, beautifully contrasted with the happiness of the righteous pictured in the preceding verse.

22. *For they are life, &c.*—To those who receive the words of wisdom, inwardly digest them, and model their conduct by them, they are the cause of a long and prosperous life, and are as salutary as healing medicines to a diseased body.—Compare ch. iii. 8, xvi. 24.

23. *Guard thy heart, &c.*]—The heart is here compared to a fountain; and as the streams are limpid or muddy, according to the state of the fountain from which they spring; so will the conduct of life be virtuous or vicious, according to the disposition of the heart.—*Matt. xv. 19.*

— *the issues of life*].—If the view of the passage here taken be just, מוצאות are those things which proceed from the heart—the actions and proceedings of life. Durell takes the word for “the goings forth,” or “the progress of life,” *i. e.* “as the heart is pure or corrupt, so is the whole course of a man’s life.”—Old version.

24. *Put away, &c.*—Literally, “ depravity of mouth, and perverseness of lips;” metonymical expressions for corrupt and perverse speech.

25. *Let thine eyes, &c.*—A direction to keep justice and equity steadily in view, and to use circumspection in every pursuit.

— *that which is right*—I take לָנֹכַח not for a particle, as most critics do, but for a noun, signifying *equity, right*, as it does ch. viii. 9; Isaiah, xxvi. 10, xxx. 10, lix. 14; Amos, iii. 10. The LXX render it, οἱ οφθαλμοὶ σου ὀρθὰ βλέπεωσαν, where, though ὀρθὰ may be taken adverbially, yet it more probably means “right things.” The Syriac is, “Let thy eyes look at (or, on) equity,” (ܠܥܕܢܝܩܐ,) and likewise the Targum. נֹכַח is a noun mas. in two other places in Prov. ch. viii. 9, xxiv. 26, though in all the other places it is feminine.

— *direct the way*—There seems to be an ellipsis of *דרך* *the way*, after the verb *יִשְׁיֶר*, to be supplied from the following verse. *יִשֶּׁר* has the sense of *directing*, applied to ways, in three other places of this book, ch. iii. 6, ix. 15, xi. 5. The sense is, *Look well to thy ways; examine thy conduct,*

and see that it is right. “*Nam hujus versus hortatio est ad rectitudinem, ei perversitati contrariam, de qua versus superior, et in quam redeunt duo inferiores.*”—Houbigant.

CHAPTER V.

2. *may keep knowledge*].—Doederlein and Dathe expound this of the shame and modesty natural in youth, which, being lost through the impure conversation of harlots, often leads to greater transgressions. But, perhaps, the meaning is more general, *i. e.* by attending unto wisdom, youth will preserve discretion in conduct, and manifest sound wisdom in speech. Then follows the exemplification in one instance, that of illicit love. The LXX, Vulg. and Arabic add a clause to the end of this verse, namely “attend not to a deceitful woman,” which Houbigant and Schleusner (*Opuscula Critica*, p. 272) think is required by the context. In my judgment, this addition is unnecessary, and unsupported by sufficient authority to be adopted, if it were. It is safer to leave the sacred text, *in our opinions*, imperfect, than to alter one iota without the most complete evidence.

3. *Although, &c.*].—A highly figurative description of the soft, alluring speech of a lewd woman, who employs every blandishment to seduce unsuspecting youth.

— *distil honey*].—תַּחֲמִץ occurs five times. Prov. xxiv. 13, shows that it cannot mean the *honey-comb*, because the honey-comb cannot be eaten; and Ps. xix. 11, proves that it cannot be synonymous with common honey; it therefore means *pure, fine, virgin honey*. We find the same expression in Cant. iv. 11, and it is equally common to the Greeks and Orientals. See Good’s *Song of Solomon*, p. 119, where a variety of similar passages are quoted from profane authors. To tran-

scribe them might amuse, but would not contribute to the illustration of the passage under consideration.

4. *Yet in the end, &c.*—The pleasures she promised terminate in bitterness and wo; and, instead of being a source of permanent delight, she serves only to plant daggers in the heart. אַחֲרֵיתָהּ, literally, "her end," *i. e.* in the end she is, &c. —Hodgs. Michael.

5. *Her feet go down, &c.*—That is, she will lead to certain destruction, if you follow her. Compare ch. ii. 18, vii. 27.

6. *Lest she should, &c.*—In order to banish serious reflection, and to avoid the upbraidings of conscience for having forsaken the paths of virtue, she plunges into a vortex of continual dissipation. The context requires us to understand חַפֵּלָס as the third person fem. with the ancient versions, Castalio, Geier, Durell, Le Clerc, Dathe, and Schultens; whose version is, "Iter vitæ ne forte libraverit; nutant orbitæ ejus, haud curat." Still, it is not to be denied that E. T. is admissible, "Lest thou shouldst ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable," *i. e.* she tries many ways to captivate, and many arts of deception, "that thou canst not know them."

— *She regardeth nothing*—יָרַע often means *to regard, to care for*, as may be seen in Parkhurst, 4; Cocceius, 4 and 11; Taylor's Concordance. The expression is here elliptical, and to be supplied by מָה, as ch. ix. 13, בַּל יָרַעַה מָה; or by מְאוֹמָה, as Gen. xxxix. 6; or the pronominal affix, referring to אֲרָחַ חַיִּים, may be supplied, "she doth not regard it," *i. e.* the way of life. תָּרַע, like the former verb, is the third person feminine.

8. *Remove thy way*—Though, as Durell remarks, the expression "remove thy way" is somewhat harsh, yet the meaning is so evident, that any change is unnecessary.

9. *the cruel harlot*—לאכזרי to the cruel, namely, to the harlot, who is cruel, because she allures unguarded youth to destruction.—(Vatablus.) The word has a feminine termination ch. xxvii. 4. If the gender be thought an insuperable objection to this explication, it will be best to understand it, in a general sense, for the servants, friends, gallants, &c. of the harlot, who will cruelly plunder and torment the companion of lewd women.

10. *And with thy riches*—עצבך, literally, “labours,” and, by a metonymy of the cause for the effect, *riches, wealth*, which are commonly gained by labour and toil.—(Doederlein.) So כח, literally, “strength,” denotes, figuratively, *wealth*, Job, vi. 22. The original may be rendered as E. T.; and Dathe supplies it thus, “Et robur tuum pereat in domo peregrinâ.”

11. *And thou mourn*—נחם is applied to express the roaring of lions ch. xix. 12, xx. 2, xxviii. 15. It is a strong expression, denoting the mourning and lamentation of him who, by a dissipated course, has not only consumed his wealth, but reduced himself to a state of disease and wretchedness. To express the full force of the word has been attempted by some translators; as, “ulules,” Piscat.; “et rugias,” Pagn. Mont. Geier, Le Clerc; “et infremas temet vorans,” Schult.; “lest thou roar,” Hodgson.

— *When thy flesh and thy body*—The LXX and Syriac take this for an Hendyadis, *i. e.* the flesh of thy body.

14. *I have been, &c.*—There are different interpretations of this verse, for which see the commentators; but the sense perhaps is, Alas! how I have disobeyed the voice of my teachers! I have plunged into almost every kind of vice; and it is an aggravation of my offences that they have been com-

mitted in the midst of the people of Israel, a people highly favoured of God. Aben Ezra supposes, that the preterite is put for the future, and that the sense is, In a little time I shall be involved in all evil.

— *the congregation and assembly*].—"Verum conjunctæ hæ voces קהל ועדה sæpissime cœtum Israelitarum, sive Synagogam V. T. significant."—Geier.

15. *Drink waters, &c.*].—After a dissuasive against incontinence, Solomon now recommends the proper remedy, namely, the enjoyment of connubial love. The context, and especially verses 18, 19, 20, prove that the discourse touches upon marriage. It is a beautiful allegory, in which a wife is represented by a well, and a legitimate offspring by the streams which issue from it. But the elegance and propriety of the image will not be discerned, without taking into consideration, that wells are a valuable possession in many Eastern countries, and that their cool waters afford the most refreshing draught in these hot and parched regions. It would not, perhaps, be unreasonable to infer from 2 Kings, xviii. 31, that every man anciently had his own cistern for containing water for his own use, which, if true, gives additional energy to the imagery. The bride in the Song of Solomon is called "a spring shut up, a fountain sealed;" (ch. iv. 12. See Percy's translation and notes, p. 75;) and the same image is, probably, alluded to Prov. ix. 17; Numb. xxiv. 7; Deut. xxxiii. 28; Ps. lxxviii. 27, Heb.; Isaiah, xlviii. 1.

16. *Then shall thy springs, &c.*].—If thou contract a lawful marriage, thou wilt be blessed with a numerous progeny, playing in the streets during childhood, and when grown to maturity, inhabiting them. מַעֲיָן *a stream or rill*, here used metaphorically for children, which issue from a wife, as rills from a fountain.—So Aben Ezra. The copulative ו is to be

supplied before יצא, and translated “then,” as by Schultens and Dathe.

— *even as rivers of waters*].—Perhaps this expression is stronger than the original requires; for מים פלגי is applied to tears Ps. cxix. 136; Lam. iii. 48. The meaning, however, cannot be mistaken by any one who attends to the context. It is a bold figure, denoting a numerous offspring.

17. *They shall belong, &c.*].—Thou shalt not only have a numerous offspring, but thou shalt have no doubt of their being really thine own, as must be the case with children sprung from promiscuous concubinage.—See Buxtorf, *Vindiciæ*, p. 600.

18. *Let thy fountain*].—That is, thy wife, spoken of ver. 15, as is clear from the second hemistich: “let her be blessed,” *i. e.* regarded as a blessing, and treated with every respect.

19. *Rejoice with*].—Participate with her in the pleasures and happiness of the conjugal state. The same expression occurs Deut. xxiv. 5; a good illustration of this text.—(See Parkh. שמח.) The particle ו in מאשה signifies *cum, with*.—Noldius, 11; so the ancient versions.

19. *Let her be, &c.*].—For an account of the animals here mentioned, (יעל and אילר,) see Bochart, *Hieroz.* par. i. lib. iii. cap. 18, &c.; an abridgment of whose remarks would require a space disproportionate to a note. Various are the reasons alleged by commentators why a wife is compared to these animals, and much learned trifling may be seen in *Poli Synop.*; but it is sufficient, to vindicate the comparison, to show that these animals were greatly admired in the age of Solomon. In *Canticles*, the bride desires her husband to be “like a

roe or young hart upon the mountains of **Bether**; (ch. ii. 17, viii. 14;) and though the word translated “the pleasant roe” occurs only here, yet its application shows that it was an animal much admired. It may be observed, that יֵעֹלָה is the ibex, or mountain goat.—Bochart, Parkhurst, Cocceius, and particularly Michael. Suppl. See likewise Harmer’s Outlines of a Commentary on Song of Solomon, p. 156.

— *And be thou ravished*].—It is obvious that שָׂוָה cannot mean here, as it usually does, *to err*, though Buxtorf (Vindiciæ, p. 870) and others would so explain it.—(See Capelli Critica Sacra, p. 944, ed. Vogel. Halæ, 1775.) Parkhurst is probably right in asserting, that its primary meaning is *to expatiate, luxuriate, run wild*; hence, *to give a loose, indulge, or lose oneself*, as it were, in love. Durell thinks that it may be illustrated by the Arabic شَجَا, to which Castell does, indeed, give the sense of *latitiam attulit, illum exhilaravit*, but Golius does not, and the proper meaning is *unxit, moerore affecit*.—! See Willmet, Lex. Arab.

22. *His own iniquities, &c.*].—An image borrowed from the toils of the hunter; and it implies, that a man shall be ensnared and held fast, like a bird in a net, and finally brought to destruction by his sins, whatever present gratification they may afford. The affix ו in יִלְכְּדֵנוּ is pleonastic, or rather, though not necessary, is added for the sake of emphasis.—(Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 176.) The Nun also, in the same word, is epenthetic.—Altingii Fundam. Punct. Ling. Sanct. p. 399 and 447.

23. *did not mind instruction*].—בִּאֵין מוֹסֵר, literally, “in there not being instruction,” *i. e.* for the want of instruction, or, in other words, “because he did not attend to it.”—So Ahen Ezra and Gersom. “Quod castigari nullus queat.”—(Schultens.) “Quod adeo proterve repudiârit omnia sana.

superiorum æqualiumve monita, quæ ab his tendiculis eum avocârint. וַיִּבְרַח וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּפְּדֵם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּפְּדֵם, ut Gen. xviii. 28; Jer. xvii. 3, imo in eadem phrasi, cum particula neg. לֹא constructum, sic occurrit Prov. xi. 14, xv. 22, xxix. 16.”—Geier. See Noldius, לֹא, 3.

CHAPTER VI.

1. *My son, if thou become surety for thy neighbour*—The authorized version is, “if thou become surety for thy friend;” but an admonition against becoming surety for a friend is so cruel, so uncharitable, so abhorrent from the spirit of the law, (Levit. xix. 18,) and so opposite to the advice of Solomon himself in other passages, (ch. xiv. 21, xvii. 17, xviii. 24, xxvii. 10,) that it is impossible to conceive this to be the meaning. Some examples of sûretiship are recorded in Scripture; as, for instance, Judah became surety to his father for his brother Benjamin, (Gen. xliii. 9,) and St. Paul for Philemon, (Philem. 18, 19.) The original word (לְרֵעִי) should, therefore, be translated, “for thy neighbour;” and it denotes a neighbour with whom thou art little acquainted; as appears, both from the second hemistich, which is explanatory of the first, and also from the parallel passages in this book, namely, ch. xi. 15, xx. 16, xxvii. 13. Even in this case, it can only be considered as a maxim of economical prudence, advising great caution and circumspection in becoming surety; for the offices of love and kindness were to be shown to strangers dwelling in Israel. —(Exod. xii. 49; Levit. xix. 34, xxv. 35; Deut. x. 19.) “Non enim animus Salomonis est omni tempore et casu pecuniaria sponsione interdicere. Inconsideratam juventutem, aliosque male consultos facultatum suarum dilapidatores, a temeritate spondendi avocat, qua sibi suisque noceant, et illi aliquando ipsi pro quo spondent.”—Witsius, *Miscellanea Sacra*, vol. i. p. 226. Lug. Bat. 1695.

“ Concerning suretiship, or warranty,” says Michaelis, “ I recollect nothing in the Mosaic writings, except that the term expressing it, *Tesumat-jad*, (תשומת יד,) that is, *giving or striking hands*, once occurs, where the circumstances of perjury are enumerated, Lev. vi. 2. It is mentioned more frequently in the Proverbs of Solomon, who gives very earnest admonitions respecting it.”—(Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, Art. 151.) But the phrase תשומת יד only occurs in the place here specified, and its meaning, moreover, is very doubtful. The practice, however, though it may not be alluded to by Moses, existed in his days; for it is mentioned in Job, ch. xvii. 3; a book as old, if not older, than the time of Moses.

— *If thou join*—אם *if*, is to be supplied from the first clause. תקע *pangere*, is here used, and in ch. xi. 15, xvii. 18, xxii. 26; Job, xvii. 3, for striking or joining hands in making an agreement or contract, which was anciently the usual way of plighting faith. Numerous examples might be adduced of this custom, which, for the sake of brevity, I omit; and refer to Parkh. ירה, 5, and תקע, 5; Durell and Scott on Job, xvii. 3; Potter’s *Antiq. of Greece*, l. ii. c. 6.

2. *Thou art snared, &c.*—If thou become surety for a stranger without due caution, thou wilt fall into a snare, and be caught, as a bird in a net, to thy own ruin.

3. *Do this, &c.*—When thou art fallen into a snare by indiscreet suretiship, hasten, and stir up thy friends to thy assistance. אפוא *now, therefore*, 2 Kings, x. 10. Dathe, Schulz, Schleusner (*Opuscula*, p. 285) refer it to the Arabic *dicere*, and the LXX, Vulg. Arab. have “ quod dico;” but, though the word occurs several times, it is always as a particle.

— *Go, hasten*—רפס, or, as it is sometimes written, רפש *to tread, to trample*, applied to the fouling of water, ch. xxv. 26; Ezek. xxxii. 2, xxxiv. 18, 19, “peculiariter usurpatum est de animalibus, quæ, aquam ingressa, pedibus eam calcando conturbant, et limosam reddunt.”—(Schroeder, *Observat. Selectæ ad Orig. Heb.* p. 99.) It only occurs in one other text, Ps. lxxiii. 31, from which nothing can be deduced as to its meaning. However, from its acknowledged sense may naturally arise that of *treading nimbly* or *quickly, hastening*; thus it is rendered ἰσθι μη ἐκλυομενος, by LXX; “festina,” by Vulg.

— *stir up*—רהב is referred to the Arabic هب *timuit*, by Schultens, Michælis, Schulz, and Eichhorn; but its signification in Hebrew does not appear to be ever allied to fear. In this place it means *to stir up, to excite*; so LXX, Sym. Vulg. Syr. and Targ.

5. *from the toils*—יד is probably a metonymy for *a toil* or *gin*, as being the instrument of putting wild animals into our power: ἵνα σωζῇ ὥσπερ δορκας ἐκ βροχων, LXX; so the Syr. and Targ. Or יד *the hunter*, may be understood, as E. T. and this renders the parallelism more complete.—(Buxtorf, *Lex. Talm.* p. 931; Waltheri *Ellipses Heb.* p. 92. ed. Schulz.) Either way the sense is the same: but the former seems preferable; for though such an application of יד is without example in Scripture usage, yet it often occurs in the sense of *power, agency, instrumentality*, (see Dindorf, Simonis, and Parkhurst,) to which the signification of *toil* or *gin* is nearly allied; and it is very suitable to the context, as well as supported by the most ancient versions.

6. *Go to the ant, &c.*—The beautiful and appropriate lines of Virgil, *Æneid*, iv. 402, and of Horace, *Sat.* i. 1. 32, will occur to the classical reader.—For an account of the nature

and habits of that curious animal the ant, see Parkhurst, מל, 4; Bochart, Hieroz. par. ii. lib. iv. c. 20; Ray on the Creation, part i. p. 135; Derham's Physico-Theology, lib. viii. cap. 5.

7. *Hath no guide*—קצץ does not occur as a verb; Schul-
tens, however, refers it to קצץ *secuit*, i. e. decisor. قضي, in Arabic, means *decrevit*, and Kadi is a title used at present in the East.

— *overseer*—שטר likewise does not occur as a verb, but often as a noun. In several Lex. it is explained *a lictor, an inferior magistrate or officer*; but Numb. xi. 16; Deut. xvi. 18, xx. 5, xxix. 10, xxxi. 28, &c.; Jos. iii. 2, show plainly that no lictor, or inferior officer, is meant. See Jennings's Jewish Antiquities, l. i. c. i. p. 36; Michaëlis, Commentaries, Art. 51.

8. *Provideth, &c.*—“Modern naturalists seem to question this fact; but it may be thought sufficient for the purpose, if it were, in Solomon's time, but a popular notion.”—(Durell.) Revelation was not intended to teach natural philosophy to mankind; and, therefore, the sacred writers scruple not to adopt the popular language of their times, though not entirely consonant with philosophic truth. That it was a popular notion, that the ants provided food in summer against winter, is evinced by this passage and ch. xxx. 25; yet later writers assert, that “in the evening they consume together whatever has been collected during the day, and do not, as is commonly supposed, lay up any store for the winter, but probably become torpid or die.”—Encyclopædia Britannica.

10. *Ever desiring, &c.*—Admirably descriptive of the sluggard's unwillingness to arouse himself from the couch of slumbering indolence. He rises not with the early morn, but desires a little more sleep, &c.—See ch. xxiv. 33, 34.

11. *As a traveller*—*i. e.* by idleness poverty shall come swiftly and suddenly, as a traveller hastens to his journey's end; or rather, it shall surely come, as a traveller, by a gradual progress, slowly but surely arrives at the place of his destination. “*Quasi viator, qui impigre pergit, ac propiusque venit, donec propositum itineris scopum contingat.*” —*Michælis, Not. Uber.* See *Le Clerc*.

— *as an armed man*—*i. e.* whom it is impossible to resist; or rather, who marches in haste to the combat.—*Poli Synop.*

12. *The worthless person*—Scriptural usage clearly establishes the meaning of בליעל to be that of *wicked, base, nequam*. Some derive it from על בלי יעל *sine jugo*, *i. e.* having shook off the yoke of obedience, like untractable oxen. Others from בלי *not*, and על *profit*; though some give the Arabic sense to על *altus fuit*, *proprie, minime altus, i. e.* vilissimus. Besides the *Heb. Lex.* see *Merrick and Rosenmuller* on *Ps. xviii. 5*; *Michælis, Epim.* in *Lowthi Præl. 9*; *Grotius*, in *2 Cor. vi. 15*; *Suiceri Thesaurus*; and *Schleusneri Lex.* in Βελιαρ.

— *walketh*—הלך is used, in a moral sense, for *conducting* or *behaving*, as in numerous instances.

13. *He winketh, &c.*—The preceding and subsequent verses show, that these expressions are intended to paint the flagitiousness of the wicked, who yield their “members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity.”—(*Rom. vi. 19.*) The eye is the index of the soul; by it the passions may be expressed; and in the base man they indicate his lust, treachery, anger, and revenge. Besides, he uses them as instruments to allure and beguile; “he that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow,” (*ch. x. 10.*) and “he that winketh with the eyes worketh evil.”—(*Ecclesiasticus, xxvii. 22*: compare *Ps. xxxv. 19.*) The wicked person shows that his feet are

running in the foul paths of sin; they plainly speak the course he pursues, and, as it were, invite others to follow his steps. He employs his hands and fingers in the perpetration of evil, and to draw others into the same paths, which is, in fact, teaching others to sin; not to say, that by their signs and motions (ἐννευμασιν ἑακτυλων, LXX) they assist the machinations of insidious villany. If the reader admires etymological refinement, let him peruse Schultens in loc. and Origines Hebrææ, tom. ii. cap. 2, § 16.

14. *He continually*—The athnach should be placed after ער, and עת בכל should begin the second hemistich, as the Vulg.

15. *Suddenly shall he be destroyed*—Literally, “he shall be broken,” *i. e.* like “as one breaketh a potter’s vessel, that cannot be made whole again.”—(Jer. xix. 11; Isa. xxx. 14.) So our translators render the same phrase ch. xxix. 1.

16. *These six things, &c.*—A certain number for an uncertain, say many commentators; but it cannot be an indefinite number here, as the things are actually enumerated in ver. 17, 18, 19. A similar form of expression occurs in four other places of Proverbs, ch. xxx. 15, 18, 21, 29, where it is said, there be three, yea, four things, &c. and in each instance the four things are specified, and no more: but the same expression in Eccles. xi. 2; Job, v. 19; Amos, i. 3, may, perhaps, be put for an indefinite number.—See Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 1257.

19. *that speaketh lies*—Literally, as Hodgson renders it, “that breathes forth lies.” So Geier, Le Clerc, Michaëlis, (Suppl. No. 2006,) &c.

21. *Tie them, &c.*—See ch. iii. 3, and the note. ער only occurs here and Job, xxxi. 36, evidently in the sense

of *binding* or *tying*: “*liga ea*,” Vulg. σφιγξον, Sym.; to the same sense LXX, Syr. Targ. Arab. and, according to Schultens and Willmet, (Lex. Arab.) the Arabic عند, in its primary meaning, denotes *torsit, torquendo ligavit*; but see Golius and Castell.

On the passage in Job, xxxi. 36, Mr. Good remarks, it “refers to the practice, among the Eastern nations, of having mottoes, or proverbial sayings, inwoven into the most ornamental and conspicuous parts of their dress, in the same manner as we now find similar mottoes inwoven into the ensignia of the different orders of knighthood, in the different courts of Europe.” But it is probable, that the practice alluded to originated from taking such expressions as these in Proverbs, and Deut. vi. 8, and Job, xxxi. 36, in a literal sense; not that these expressions refer to the practice, already existing, of wearing mottoes and phylacteries.—(Le Clerc on Exodus, xiii. 9; Jennings’s Jewish Antiq. l. i. c. 10.) It is not unlikely that in Deut. vi. 8, &c. there is an allusion to the jewels and ornaments at that period usually worn in the East. However that may be, the expressions ch. iii. 3, vi. 21, are undoubtedly, at least in part, taken from the Pentateuch.

22. *When thou goest, &c.*—The singular is put for the plural, as the connexion shows. The verse may, perhaps, be more correctly translated—

“When thou goest, let them lead thee;
When thou liest down, let them keep thee;
And when thou wakest, let them be thy meditation.”

This agrees with the rendering of Dathe.

— *They shall talk with thee*—i. e. they shall be agreeable to thee, like the familiar intercourse of friends; they shall form the pleasing subject of thy meditations. *now to think deeply, to meditate*; and, as we are apt to talk most of those

things which most occupy our thoughts, it denotes, also, *to talk, to speak*. This sense, though not in use in the other Oriental tongues, Michaelis confesses cannot well be dispensed with.—Suppl. No. 2432.

23. *For the commandment, &c.*—“*Ut in tenebris lucerna, aut fax ostendit nobis, quâ eundum sit: in ignorantie humanæ caligine, quæ nos, per hanc totam vitam, cingit, revelatio divina nos docet, quid sit faciendum, quid vitandum.*”—Le Clerc. Compare Ps. cxix. 105.

— *And the reproofs of instruction*—*i. e.* those reproofs which the voice of instruction gives; “*et quæ disciplinam afferunt.*”—Mercer.

25. *Desire not*—חמד properly means *to desire*, and it may be questioned whether it ever strictly means *to lust after*: but see Dindorfii Lex. Heb.

— *Neither let her beguile*—תקחך, from לקח, *to take*, *i. e.* *to allure, to beguile*. Propertius, l. i. Eleg. 1, has an exactly parallel expression,

“*Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis.*”

Many more examples may be found in the edition of Passeratius.

— *with her eyes*—Literally, “*with her eyelids*,” a metonymy for the eyes, or rather the glances of the eyes; for the eyelids are chiefly instrumental in those amorous glances, by which a lewd woman fascinates the heart of the gazer. “*The eye of an harlot is the snare of her lover*,” says St. Ambrose; and it is well known that Eastern women were very curious in painting and beautifying their eyelids, which was supposed to add a wonderful brilliancy and expression. See some entertaining remarks on this custom in Burder’s *Oriental Customs*, No. 752, Lond. 1816. “*Nec capiaris*

nutibus illius," Vulg.—Compare Job, xxxi. 1. The classical scholar will find a beautiful passage, allied to this, in Musæus, Her. et Leand. and another in Paradise Lost, b. xi. l. 620.

26. *For by means, &c.*—By frequenting the houses of lewd women a man is brought to poverty and degradation; "he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth his substance."—(Ch. xxix. 3; see also ch. v. 9, 10.) The clause is elliptical, and must be supplied, as E. T. "a man is brought," "devenitur." In this way a good sense is produced, without violating grammar, or altering the usual signification of the words; and it is so construed by Pagn. Muns. Tig. Jun. Trem. Piscat. Merc. Clar. Grot. Mont. Geier, Le Clerc, Schult. Storr; but the LXX give it another turn, Τιμη γαρ πορνης οση και ενος αρτου, and so the Vulg. "Pretium enim scorti vix est unius panis." So Dathe. The Syr. and Targ. depart still more widely from the original.

—*layeth snares*—Together with illicit intercourse with lewd women, Solomon here joins the aggravated offence of adultery, declaring the pernicious effects of it to be certain and enormous, in so much that the polluter of the marriage bed "destroyeth his own life," (ver. 32.) It is not, however, to be inferred from this, that, in ch. ii. 16, and other passages in which the word "harlot" is used, he includes in that term every woman who violates the laws of chastity, whether married or single. אשה זרה, אשה זונה, and נכריה denote an unmarried woman addicted to licentious habits; but אשה מנאפח, אשה מנאפח, and אשה איש (an Hebraism for a faithless wife) are the proper terms for an adulteress.—(See Gussetii Lex. נאף.) The verb צוד means *to hunt, to catch beasts, birds, or fishes*; and is applied, in a spiritual sense, to catching souls, namely, inveigling or ensnaring them; (Ezek. xiii. 18, 20, 21;) and "to hunt the precious soul," as Taylor observes,

(Concord. in voc.) is “to use all artifices to draw it into sin and perdition.” Solomon frequently employs images taken from the arts of the hunter, to describe the seductions of sin and the allurements of sinners.

27. *Can a man take*—חָנַן occurs, in the sense of *taking*, Isaiah, xxx. 14; Ps. lii. 7, Heb. In ch. xxv. 22, our translators render it “thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head,” (συνευσας, LXX, which is retained by the apostle, Rom. xii. 20,) “hoc est, accipiendo ponis seu coacervas super caput,” as Glass remarks (Phil. Sac. p. 186.) But see Parkhurst and Cocceius on the word.

29. *So it is with him, &c.*—A man can no more have criminal intercourse with his neighbour's wife, without suffering for it, than he can walk upon hot coals without being burnt. The expressions “goeth in,” and “toucheth,” will be illustrated, if compared with Gen. vi. 4, xix. 31, xxxviii. 9, xx. 6, 1 Cor. vii. 1.

— *shall not be unpunished*—נָקָה often means *poena vacuus*, exempt from punishment, ch. xi. 21, xvi. 5, xvii. 5, xix. 5, 9; Jer. xxv. 29.

30. *Men do not disregard, &c.*—Theft, even when committed to satisfy the cravings of hunger, is not disregarded, is not treated as a matter of indifference, but is punished; much more severe is the punishment which the adulterer shall receive, by whatever pretexts he may varnish over his crime. This is the argument which the Paræmiast proposes in this and the three following verses: Doederlein's note is excellent; “*non spernunt in fure furta*, i. e. non negligunt, non tractant ut levia; nec impunitum dimittunt furem, *dura famis necessitate compulsus, ut furaretur*: quanto minus impunitatem

sperabit, qui vagæ libidinis restringendæ causa conjugem alterius furtivo amore rapit.”—Scholia in loc. See Le Clerc; and Cocceius in 112.

31. *shall restore seven-fold*—Theft, by the Jewish law, was punished by making restitution; (Exod. xxii. 1—4;) and if the offender was unable to make such restitution, he was ordered to be sold for a slave.—(Levit. xxv. 39.) It has been maintained that theft, instigated by extreme want, and committed to appease the calls of hunger, is justified by necessity; (Grotius, de Jure Bel. et Pacis, l. ii. c. 2, § 6; Puffendorf, de Jure Nat. et Gent. l. ii. c. 6, § 5;) but others consider this doctrine unwarrantable and subversive of the security of property.—(Blackstone’s Commentaries, l. iv. c. 2, § 4.) Such an excuse for theft, in this country at least, is wholly inadmissible, as the Constitution has established a legal provision for the poor, and none need ever be reduced to the necessity of stealing to support nature. Such likewise appears to have been the case under the Mosaic dispensation.—(Deut. xxiv. 19—22, xiv. 28, 29, xv. 7; Levit. xxv. 35; Deut. xv. 11.) He who reflects upon these laws, which, for the sake of brevity, I have only referred to, will see that it was scarcely, if at all, possible to be reduced to such a state of indigence as to be compelled to steal to support life; Moses, therefore, made no ordinance for such a case. Michælis thinks, that a theft committed from pure hunger would have been overlooked; (Commentaries, Art. 284;) but it is more probable, as no exception is made in the Mosaic law for such a case, that, should it be supposed ever to occur, it would have been subjected to the usual punishment.—(See Selden, de Jure Nat. et Gent. l. vi. c. 6.) The passage of Proverbs under consideration is not a case in point, as Puffendorf and Michælis observe, (ut supra citati,) for the second hemistich

mentions "the substance of his house;" he must, therefore, have possessed some property, and could not steal through absolute necessity.

— *seven-fold*—Indefinitely, for a full and complete satisfaction and restitution. Geier says, "hæc vox (שבעתים) nullibi in sacris ponitur pro numero definito."

32. *destroyeth his own life*—Adultery was a crime punishable with death by the Levitical law.—(Levit. xx. 10.) עשנה is rendered by Durell, "he that embraceth her, or hath commerce with her;" and so Duport (Greek metrical version,) and Reiske (Conjecturæ in loc.) Ezek. xxiii. 3, 8, 21, is appealed to, but it does not make this interpretation satisfactory. The feminine is, as usual, put for the neuter.—Storr, *Observat. ad Anal. et Synt.* p. 247.

33. *Hurt and dishonour, &c.*—So Horace's fine lines, l. i. Sat. 2, 37.

Audire est operæ pretium, procedere recte
 Qui mœchis non vultis, ut omni parte laborent,
 Utque illis multo corrupta dolore voluptas,
 Atque hæc rara cadat dura inter sæpe pericla.
 Hic se præcipitem tecto dedit; ille flagellis
 Ad mortem cæsus; fugiens hic decedit acrem
 Prædonum in turbam: dedit hic pro corpore nummos;
 Hunc perminxerunt calones: quin etiam illud
 Accidit, ut cuidam testes caudamque salacem
 Demeteret ferrum. Jure omnes.

34. *When jealousy, &c.*—Durell renders this clause, "When the rage of a man (or rather, of a husband) is moved by jealousy." Dath's is to the same purpose; but Doederlein considers קנאה as the preterite of Piel, and renders it, "quum ira viri incitata est."

35. *He will not accept, &c.*—Jealousy is very common and powerful among the people of the East; and is frequently carried to an extent, of which we have no example in European countries. “Whoever, in Persia, has the misfortune to see, or the imprudence to look at, the wife of a man of rank, were it but as she travels on the road, and at ever so great a distance, is sure to be severely beaten by her eunuchs, and perhaps put to death; and to meet any of the king’s concubines is such a capital crime, that, on a certain occasion, when the favourite queen happened, during the chase, to be overtaken by a storm, and under the necessity of taking refuge in a hamlet, not one of the people would let her majesty in, that they might not have the misfortune of seeing her.”—Michælis, Commentaries, Art. 260; Burder’s Oriental Customs, No. 1277.

CHAPTER VII.

2. *As the apple of thine eye*—A proverbial expression, denoting the greatest care and tenderness, for no part is more carefully preserved than the eye.—(See Deut. xxxii. 10; Ps. xvii. 8.) In these places עֵינַי evidently means the *pupil* or *apple* of the eye; but in ver. 9 and ch. xx. 20, it as evidently means *night* or *darkness*. Kimchi, who has been followed by Schultens, Michælis, &c. derives the word from עַם *a man*, and supposes it to be a diminutive noun, signifying *homunculum*, referring to the little image which the spectator beholds in the eye of another. The Arabians denominate the pupil العين انسان *hominem oculi*. “Fateor, puerile et ludens videri etymon posse; sed meminerimus, aliquam partem linguarum et pueris deberi, quorum ex ore patres vocem arripiunt, suamque faciunt.”—(Michælis, Suppl. No. 84.) Geier and others derive it from עֵינַי *niger fuit*, which, though not occurring in Hebrew, is to be found in the Rabbinical writings.

—(Buxtorf, *Lex. Talm. et Rab. in voc.*) Parkhurst deduces it from *ישח* *existit, est*, and thinks it means “*substance, the very, ipsissimus*, as of the eye or of the night.” Perhaps it may be referred to *ישן* *to sleep*: sleep is a state of darkness; hence the heemantic noun *אישון* denotes *darkness*, and, secondarily, *the pupil*, as being dark or black. In its form resembling *איתן* *strength*, from *יתן*, *radix* inusit; *מיכל* *a river*, from *יכל*; *תימן* *the south*, from *ימן*; *תימרה* *a column*, from *ימר*; *חידוש* *new wine*, from *ירש*; *מינקת* *a nurse*, from *ינק*; though the Jod, when an heemantic letter is prefixed, more commonly is changed into Vau. *חיה*, in the first line, is the imperative for the future, as ch. iv. 4.

3. *Bind them, &c.*—See ch. iii. 3, vi. 21, and notes.

4. *Say unto wisdom, &c.*—By these expressions great intimacy and familiarity are implied. Wisdom ought to be as dear to us as a sister, and prudence as intimate with us as a familiar acquaintance. In the same manner Job observes, (ch. xvii. 14,) “I have said to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister:” by which he means, that he is, as it were, allied to corruption; must speedily turn to corruption, and become the prey of worms and reptiles.—Compare Job, xxx. 29.

5. *That they may preserve thee, &c.*—To illustrate the pernicious effects of yielding to the seducements of harlots, and of indulging in an unlawful gratification of the passions, Solomon here introduces an apoloque, which, for beauty of expression, and elegance of description, has few rivals. It paints, with exquisite truth and colouring, the allurements of a wanton, who accosts, salutes, and inveigles a thoughtless, unsuspecting youth. Seduced by her wiles, he follows her “as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool goeth to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through his liver;”

till he experiences the bitter consequences of yielding to the persuasion of the harlot, whose house "is the way of Hades going down to the chambers of death." Happy would it be, if youth, warned by the admonitions of the royal sage, and by the celestial voice of Christianity, would avoid the pollutions to which the incontinence of the human heart and the lewdness of prostituted beauty are continually inviting them. A riotous, turbulent joy may be gathered from illicit indulgences; but the sweet satisfaction of a virtuous mind, the calm of conscious innocence, the delightful amenity of a soul actuated by wisdom, and guided by religion, can never be experienced "in the bought smiles of harlots." All is "loveless, joyless, unendeared;" and even in respect of pleasure, the sole object of the profligate's research, he is a gainer who knows how "to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;" but evidently more so is he when he remembers the awful denunciation, that "whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

6. *When at the window, &c.*—חלון only occurs here and Judges, v. 28. In both places it is accompanied by חלל; these two words, therefore, cannot be synonymous. As חלל, from חלל *perforare*, undoubtedly means *the aperture through which light is admitted, a window*; חלון most probably denotes *a lattice*, which was used in Eastern countries to protect the house from intrusion, and likewise to admit the air, which must have been very cooling and refreshing in hot regions.—(See Harmer's Observations, vol. i. p. 280, ed. Clarke.) The root חנב is not found in Syriac or Chaldee; but in Arabic حنّب signifies *frigidus fuit*, (Willmet, Lex. Arab.) and to this root it has been referred by Schult. Doederl. Dathe, Schulz, Faber; and, as a lattice (חלון) was, in one point of view, used for the sake of coolness, it bears some faint resemblance to the meaning of the Arabic root. The

inhabitants of the East have, at the present day, kiosks, a kind of bow-window, which, as Dr. Russel informs us, "are quite open to the rooms, and, having (latticed) windows in front and on each side, there is a great draught of air, which makes them cool in summer, the advantage chiefly intended by them."—Quoted by Parkhurst, קרה, 8. See also the same author on שנוב.

8. *near the corner*].—Our translators and others take פנה per synecp. for פנתה, "her corner," "loco sc. obvio, et ad capiendos juvenes accommodato," as Menochius remarks, which derives some support from ver. 12; but the version I have given yields a good sense, and is sanctioned by the ancient versions, Le Clerc, Dathe, &c.

— *her house*].—The affix in ביתה is anticipative, referring to the harlot mentioned ver. 10.—See other examples in Glass, p. 157.

9. *In the twilight, &c.*].—The youth, void of understanding, wandered about the street from dusk to dark and gloomy night. Idleness is the parent of much mischief, and to ramble about the streets at the close of day, without a proper object, merely for idle curiosity and amusement, is to court sin, and to fall voluntarily into the snares which lewdness is constantly laying in the way. As the youth could not be seen "in the dark and gloomy night," these expressions must be taken in a comparative sense, for the first dusk of night; or else we must suppose, that torches or other lights enabled people to see objects in the streets: or, perhaps, it was meant to describe the imprudence of the young man, in loitering about the streets, from the twilight till dark and gloomy night.

10. *And behold there met, &c.*].—From this passage we may infer, that harlots were distinguished among the Jews by some peculiarity of dress, though the Scriptures give no

intimation in what it consisted. Tamar, when she wished to appear like one, "covered herself with a veil;" (Gen. xxxviii. 14;) but it was customary for all women in the East to appear in public with a veil; and if a veil had been the distinguishing attire of harlots, chaste women would not have worn it, as we find they did, from the example of Rebecca.—(Gen. xxiv. 65.) Though it is said, that Judah "thought her to be an harlot, because she had covered her face," (ver. 15,) this seems only to imply that, in consequence of her being veiled, he did not recognize her for Tamar, his daughter-in-law. Among the Athenians, the courtezans wore flowered garments; (Potter's Ant. lib. iv. cap. 12;) and at Rome they were not permitted to wear the stola, but were distinguished by a peculiar head-dress, called mitra, or mitella.—(Adam's Rom. Ant. Edinburgh ed. 412, 424.) The observation above, that it was customary for all women in the East to appear in public veiled, seems confirmed by the history of Tamar, (see Patrick on Gen. xxxviii 15,) of Ruth, (ch. iii. 15,) and by the existence of the same custom among the Asiatics of modern times.—(Jahn, Archæol. Bibl. § 127.) Among the Greeks, virgins were not permitted to appear in public, or to converse with men, without a veil over their faces, (Potter's Ant. of Greece, lib. iv. cap. 11,) which was also the case with women among the ancient Romans.—(Adam's Rom. Ant. p. 422.) Nevertheless, the learned Schroeder supposes, that it was not anciently the custom of virgins to veil their faces previous to their espousals, as this article of dress is not mentioned in the account of Rebecca and Rachel in their virgin state; (Gen. xxiv. 15, xxix. 9;) nor of Sarah, when she pretended to be the unmarried sister of Abraham (Gen. xii. 13).—See Schroeder, de Vest. Mulier, Heb. cap. vi. § 13.

— *With the attire*—שִׁית; from שָׂוה *ponere*, denotes a garment Ps. lxxiii. 6. נִצְרָה, literally, "guarded or reserved of

heart," *i. e.* "concealing her real views with pretences of love;" (Taylor's Concordance;) and is well translated by Castalio and Dathe, "*mente astuta*," *subtile of heart*.

11. *She is loud and stubborn*—Durell renders this clause, "she cannot rest quiet, but backslideth," and observes, "that the being loud and stubborn are qualities which do not correspond with the meretricious arts of captivating." True; but verses 11 and 12 are a parenthesis, describing the nature and disposition of a harlot; not the arts she uses to captivate the young men. Whatever softness and fascination she may assume for the purpose of alluring, she is, in reality, loud, tumultuous, boisterous; obstinate in her vicious purposes, and too refractory to listen to admonition. מרר מררת, which occurs in seventeen other places in the sense of *stubborn, rebellious, refractory*.

12. *Now she is without*—בחוץ here may mean, *at the outside*, namely, at the threshold of the house. She at one time comes to the door of her habitation; at another, proceeds into the street. Or the hemistich may, perhaps, be rendered, "Now she is in the street, now in the squares or market-places;" for חוץ sometimes means *a street*; and רחב may mean *a square* or *forum*, as being a broader place than חוץ: but I have met with no passage quite decisive of this distinction; yet, as they are often joined together, they can scarcely be synonymous.

13. *with an impudent face*—Literally, "she hardened her face," "*vultum suum obfirmavit*," Schultens and others; *i. e.* with an impudent face: *αναίδης προσωπω*, LXX; "*procaci vultu*," Vulg.—Compare ch. xxi. 29; Eccles. viii. 1; Deut. xxviii. 50.

14. *I have a sacrificial banquet*—Those sacrifices which were offered in grateful acknowledgment for mercies received, and as a means of preserving the favour and blessing of God, are called, in the Levitical code, Shelamim, (שלמים,) or peace-offerings. The animal to be sacrificed was taken either from the herd or the flock; (Levit. iii. 1, 6;) the fat pieces, the kidneys, and the rump or tail, if the sacrifice was a sheep or goat, were burnt upon the altar; (Levit. iii. 3—5, iii. 9—11;) the breast and the right shoulder were the priests' due, allotted them for their maintenance; (Levit. vii. 29—36;) all the rest of the peace-offering was appropriated for an offering-feast, and consumed by the offerer and his friends.—(Levit. vii. 16, xix. 6; Deut. xii. 6.) It was to such a feast, prepared with the remains of the peace-offering, that the harlot invited the unwary youth, as many commentators suppose; and I think the word Shelamim, in this passage, does not admit of any other rational interpretation. It must mean such a feast, or, in other words, a sacrificial-banquet: as if she had said, “I have an entertainment for thee at my house; for, having this day paid my vows, I mean to devote the remains of my offering to conviviality and joy.”—See Josephus, *Antiq.* lib. iii. cap. 9; Outram, *de Sacrificiis*, lib. i. cap. 17; Jennings's *Jewish Antiq.* lib. i. cap. 5.

— *paid my vows*—Vows were sanctioned by the Levitical law, and the priest was authorized to enforce their fulfilment.—(Levit. xxvii. 2, et seq.; Numb. xxx. 1, et seq.; Deut. xxiii. 21; Michaelis, *Commentaries*, Art. 144.) “There appears no command or encouragement in the Christian Scriptures to make vows; much less any authority to break through them, when they are made. The few instances of vows (*Acts*, xviii. 18, xxi. 23) which we read of in the New Testament were religiously observed.”—Paley's *Moral Philosophy*, l. iii. c. 5.

15. *to seek thee*—I determined diligently to seek thee, and to invite thee to partake of my festive revelry. פָּנֶיךָ “thy face;” a synecdoche for the whole person, as προσωπον in Acts, xx. 25, 38.

16. *I have decked*—Ample scope is afforded in this verse for the acuteness of the philologist. My remarks shall be as brief as is consistent with perspicuity, though they necessarily must be more extensive than usual. The root רבר occurs five times. In Gen. xli. 42; Ezek. xvi. 11, it undoubtedly denotes a chain for the neck, *a collar, a necklace*; hence the primary meaning of the word most probably is *to weave, to intertwine*; and מרבדים, in this verse and ch. xxxi. 22, will mean *woven works, tapestry, or carpets*. The virtuous woman in ch. xxxi. 22, is described as making these מרבדים; and the task of spinning, weaving, and even dying, was anciently performed by the women.—(Exod. xxxv. 25; ch. xxxi. 13, and note; Goguet's *Origin of Laws*, par. 1, l. ii. c. 2.) Helen and Penelope are represented by Homer as employed at the loom; (Iliad iii. 125, vi. 490, xxii. 440; Odyss. ii. 94, vi. 52, 306. Compare Odyss. vii. 105; Æneid, vii. 14;) so are the Eastern ladies at the present time. “Carpets,” says Dr. Shaw, “which are much coarser than those from Turkey, are made here (*in Barbary*) in great numbers, and of all sizes. But the chief branch of their manufactories is, the making of *hykes*, or blankets, as we should call them. The women alone are employed in this work, who do not use the shuttle, but conduct every thread of the woof with their fingers.”—(Harmer's *Observations*, vol. iv. p. 218.) The arts of tapestry and embroidery were brought to a high degree of perfection among the Asiatics at a very early period, and particularly among the Jews, as is evident from the description which Moses gives us of the Tabernacle. He speaks of works embroidered with a tissue of various colours, (Exod.

xxvi. 1, 31; xxxix. 2,) and of rich embroideries of gold in the habits of the high-priest, and in the veils designed for the Tabernacle.—(Exod. xxviii. 8, xxxix. 3. See Goguet, par. 2, lib. ii. c. 2.) The מרבדים then, of which Solomon speaks in this verse, were, probably, a kind of coverlets, embroidered, and richly ornamented with figures and devices. Such embroidered carpets or coverlets are in use at the present time. “The Arabs,” says D’Arvieux, “have coverlets of all sorts: some are very beautiful, stitched with gold and silk, with flowers of gold and silver.” “When it was dark,” says Dr. Chandler, “three coverlets, richly embroidered, were taken from a press in the room which we occupied, and delivered, one to each of us; the carpet or sofa, and a cushion, serving, with this addition, instead of a bed.”—(Harmer, vol. iv. p. 102, 148.) The version of Aq. and Theod. is περιστρωμασι περιεστρωσα, stragulis stravi.

— *my couch*].—Mr. Harmer takes ערש for the “furniture of an Eastern divan;” (vol. ii. p. 373;) but it properly denotes *a mattress or couch*; for, first, it occurs ten times, and couch or mattress is everywhere applicable. Even in Deut. iii. 11, the ערש of Og, which is said to be of iron, was most likely, as Mr. Harmer observes, a mattress stuffed with small pieces of iron, like a coat of mail. 2. This sense is supported by the kindred dialects. ܕܡܬܐ in Syriac and ערסא in Chaldee denote *a bed or couch*. The Arabic does not afford us so clear an evidence, yet عرش is *a throne*, and معرس is *locus quo noctu quiescunt viatores*. 3. It is so rendered in the ancient versions. Michælis thinks that the LXX and Vulg. understood the word in this passage to mean a kind of hanging bed, not placed upon the floor, as usual.—(Suppl. No. 2306.) “In the East, and particularly in Persia and Turkey, beds are not raised from the ground with bed-posts, a canopy, and curtains; people lie on the floor;” as Sir John Chardin informs

us.—(See more in Parkhurst, נטה, 14; Harmer's Observations, vol. iv. p. 418.) But nothing can be gathered from Scripture as to the fashion of the Jewish beds.

— *with embroideries*—חטב *to cut, to carve wood*; hence חטבוהו “*figured tapestry or carpeting, from its resemblance to carved work.*”—(Parkhurst.) This sense is confirmed by the Chaldee and Arabic dialects, as may be seen in Michælis, Suppl. and Cocceius, ed. Schulz; and by the LXX, Vulg. Syr. Targ. See also Dindorfii Lex. Heb.

— *of Egyptian linen*—רשם is ἀπαξ λεγόμενον, and no light is thrown upon it either by the Oriental dialects, or the ancient versions. It is, probably, an Egyptian word denoting *linen*.—(Simonis, Lex. in voc.) Egypt was noted for the produce of flax.—(Exod. ix. 31; Ol. Celsius, Hierobot. tom. i. p. 89 et seq.; Bochart, Phaleg, lib. iii. c. 4.) In Joseph's time the linen manufacture appears to have arisen to a great height; and it formed a considerable part of the ancient commerce of the Egyptians. We are told that “Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn; the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.”—(2 Chron. i. 16; 1 Kings, x. 28.) In Ezek. xxvii. 7, we read of “fine linen, with brodered work, from Egypt.”

17. *I have perfumed*—Perfumes were, as is well known, an article of great luxury among the Orientals. The Tabernacle and its utensils were perfumed with odoriferous ointment; (Exod. xxx. 23;) the Psalmist makes mention of perfumed garments; (Ps. xlv. 8;) and it was usual to lavish perfumes upon their persons.—(Esther, ii. 12; Cantic. iii. 6, v. 5.) Perfumes are still an object of the highest request among the people of the East; (Harmer's Outlines, p. 123, and Observations passim;) and they were anciently so among the more luxurious of the Greeks and Romans.—(See Schroeder, de

Vest. Mulier, cap. x. § 9, p. 160.) Horace, in a passage very much resembling this verse, makes Canidia say of her inconstant lover,

“ Indormit unctis omnium cubilibus
Oblivione pellicum.”—Epod. v. l. 69.

Namely,—“ In forgetfulness of me he sleeps in the perfumed bed omnium pellicum.”

18. *let us take our fill*—נִרְוָה, μεθυσθωμεν, Aq. Sym. Theod.; “inebriemur,” Vulg. and many modern translators: but, after an examination of all the passages where the root occurs, I think it very doubtful whether it ever strictly means *to be drunken*; it rather means *to saturate, to satiate*, and may be correctly rendered with E. T. in this passage, “let us take our fill,” *i. e.* let us satiate ourselves.

19. *For the master*—הַאִישׁ is ambiguous. LXX, Syriac, and some among the moderns, render it “my husband;” but, as it is improbable that a harlot, “who lieth in wait at every corner,” (ver. 12,) should have a husband, I have preferred rendering it more indefinitely, “the master,” or keeper of the house.

20. *with him*—בְּיָדוֹ, literally, “in his hand.” From ch. i. 14, and Isaiah, xlv. 6, it may be collected, that the ancient Hebrews had bags or purses for the reception of money, which might, therefore, be carried in the hand, or tied to some part of the dress.—(See Schroeder, de Vest. Mulier. cap. xvii. § 6.) Nevertheless, it is correctly rendered by our English translators “with him;” for it is probable, that the ancients did not *usually* carry their purses in their hands, but in their girdles, or rather they were a part of the girdle itself.—(See Parkhurst’s and Schleusner’s Lex. in ζωνη, and Harmer’s Observations, vol. i. p. lxx.) בִּיר means *with, apud*, Gen.

xliv. 16, 17; Exod. xxi. 16; though the two latter texts are mistranslated in E. T. "in his hand:" so likewise in 1 Sam. ix. 8, it should have been *with*, *apud*.

— *the time appointed*—כסם is, probably, the same as כספ in Ps. lxxxi. 4, and may be derived from כסם, *numeravit*, i. e. "*Feria stativa, tempus statum, quod in numeratum anni diem semper recurrit.*"—(Buxtorf, *Lex. in voc.*) It may be understood of any appointed time; but Dimock's notion is not improbable, that it may refer, in particular, to one of the three great festivals at which he was obliged to return. Some, however, take it for *the new moon*, some for *the full moon*, and some for *scenopegia*, the feast of Tabernacles. Besides the *Lex.* see Michælis and Le Clerc on Ps. lxxxi. 4.

22. *Or as a fool to the correction of the stocks*—There is not, perhaps, any clause in the whole book of Proverbs which has given the critics more trouble than this, nor one which has been more variously translated. After examining the pages of the most approved commentators, I have not found any interpretation perfectly satisfactory; yet I incline, though with much hesitation, to that of the learned Hunt, who, in a particular dissertation upon the passage, takes אֵיל for *a hart*; עָכַס for a verb *to skip*, or *bound along*, as Isaiah, iii. 16, which Bishop Lowth renders, "and with their feet lightly skipping along," (in Arabic عَكَش *to rush into*, or *run upon*;) and מוֹסֵר for *a snare* or *toil*. Agreeably to this interpretation of the words his version is,

"He goeth after her straightway,
As an ox goeth to the slaughter;
Or as an hart boundeth into the toils,
Till a dart strike through his liver:
As a bird hasteth to the snare,
And knoweth not that it is for his life."

In support of this version it may be observed, that the LXX, Syriac, and Chaldee, though extremely loose and paraphrastic, introduce a word corresponding with *hart*; that it renders the parallelism complete; and that the imagery thus becomes consistent, without putting any violence upon the words: on the contrary, it requires an alteration of the text, unwarranted by MSS. and but slenderly supported by the versions, nor, perhaps, absolutely demanded by any urgent necessity. This exposition, however, is approved by Taylor, Doederlein, Arnoldi, Dathe. The version of Dr. Hodgson is, "Yea, like a fool, he runneth on to punishment." Parkhurst's is, "And as the fettered fool (*goeth*) to correction; or as the fool fettered for correction."—(In עכס. See Schroeder, *de Vestitu Mulierum*, cap. 1.) I have followed the authorized version, according to the rule I have prescribed myself in doubtful cases; at the same time, submitting the expositions, which appear most worthy of attention, to the judgment of the reader.

26. *many wounded*—ללח means *to profane*, as well as *to wound*; the clause, therefore, will admit of being translated, "For many are the profane *whom* she hath caused to fall;" but the authorized version seems preferable; namely, many have been wounded and cast down by her.

— *And very many*—סע denotes *number* or *quantity*, Numb. xxxii. 1; Jer. v. 6, xv. 8, xxx. 14, 15; Ps. xl. 5, 12, cxxxix. 17, xxxv. 18.—(See Rosenmüller on Ps. xxxv. 18.) The parallelism requires this sense, as it corresponds with רבים in the first line. Symmachus and Theodotion render it *αναριθμητοι*; and so do the LXX; and they are followed by many among the modern translators.

27. *chambers of death*—See Lowth's *Prælect.* p. 87. ed. Oxon. 1810.

CHAPTER VIII.

We are now arrived at one of the most important chapters in the book of Proverbs, since many, both among the ancients and moderns, have considered it as relating to the second Person in the Holy Trinity. If their opinion be correct, it is not to be viewed in the light of a bold personification of wisdom, but of a figurative and highly-wrought description of our blessed Lord. Others again have regarded it only as a *prosopopœia*, in which the excellence of wisdom is portrayed in the bright and vivid colours which distinguish the productions of the Oriental muses.

To form a decided judgment on this important point, we must examine the passage with the utmost scrupulosity, weighing the exact force of the words with philological precision, and comparing Scripture with Scripture. Bare assertion is entitled to no respect; sound argument and solid learning are the basis of an enlightened exposition of the sacred Oracles; and, setting aside the prejudices of early opinions, we should resolve to follow, with undeviating step, the guidance of truth, eternal and immutable truth, to whatever conclusions it may lead us.

In examining the contents of this chapter, the interpreter's progress will be much facilitated, if he can commence his investigation with any clear and incontrovertible principles. Such facilities are afforded in the present instance; for it may be laid down as a fundamental principle, that it was intended to delineate either God's *attribute of wisdom*, or a *real, subsisting Being*, or *Religion*, which, as contradistinguished from the two former, may be called *abstract wisdom*. It may, in the next place, be inferred, that the wisdom spoken of from the twelfth to the thirtieth verse, a passage undoubtedly relating to the same subject, has reference to the Divine Nature, because "Jehovah possessed it the Beginning of his way," (v. 22,) and

because it existed “from everlasting, before the world was,” (v. 23.) If so, it must either mean an *attribute*, or one of the *Persons* of the Godhead. Some of the attributes of God may, in an inferior degree, be possessed by man; as love, mercy, justice, wisdom: others are incommunicable; as omnipotence, ubiquity, self-existence. Now if, upon examination, some parts of the description should be found to be inconsistent with the notion of an attribute, the necessary inference is, that one of the *Persons* in the Divine Essence is designated by the title of Wisdom.

This conclusion is inevitable; yet it cannot be inferred from this which of the divine *Persons* is meant; and, in order to determine this question, other circumstances are to be taken into consideration. If, therefore, it should appear, that some passages, though they might possibly be applied to God the Father or the Holy Ghost, are more suitable to God the Son; that others can alone refer to the divine Logos; and that the same expressions are actually predicated of him in various parts of the sacred writings; its reference to the Son, the second Person in the blessed Trinity, will be fully established.

The result of an attentive inquiry, conducted upon these principles, is, that the royal sage commences with the consideration of wisdom in the abstract, which, in an elegant personification, he presents to the admiring view of mankind. But, as he proceeds, his imagination becomes warmed; his mind is elevated to rapturous contemplation of the Deity, the pure fountain of all wisdom; and, full of the divine afflatus, he pours forth the suggestions of sacred inspiration in terms which characterize the Son of God, “the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.”—Heb. i. 3.

Whether Solomon was aware of the exact import of the expressions which he employed; whether he understood them as descriptive of the Only-begotten of the Father, cannot, *perhaps*, be determined; but that the Spirit intended to depict

something more than abstract wisdom, even a divine and celestial Being, I have the strongest conviction. Probably, the prophets seldom understood the full meaning of the oracles which they delivered; (1 Pet. i. 10;) but, however that may be, it is our duty to endeavour to learn the mind of the Spirit by a grammatical analysis of the language employed by the sacred penmen. Far be it from us to imitate those German theologians, who, in their biblical criticisms, seem to forget that there is such a thing as inspiration. But “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God;” (2 Tim. iii. 16;) let us, then, search the divine writings with humble diligence and reverent attention; praying for heavenly aid to assist us in understanding their sacred treasures, and gratefully embracing their hallowed truths, “which are able to make us wise unto salvation.”—2 Tim. iii. 15.

1. *Doth not Wisdom, &c.*—The abrupt boldness with which this fine prosopopœia is introduced is worthy of remark. The philosophic monarch, at the conclusion of his energetic description of the fatal effects of yielding to the seducements of prostituted beauty, is struck with a sudden thought of the excellence of wisdom, and, as if he had just heard her voice, exclaims, **Hark!**

Doth not Wisdom make proclamation?
And Understanding send forth her voice?

He then depicts her as present to the view—

On the top of the high places by the ways,
In the paths she taketh up her station, &c.

Wisdom is, in like manner, personified ch. i. 20, ix. 3, as uttering her voice in the streets, and proclaiming in the high places of the city. Such personifications are not uncommon in Scripture, as Ps. lxxxv. 10; Job, xxviii. 14, 22; Isaiah, v. 14; Jer. xlvii. 6, 7; Eccles. xiv. 1, where the Son of

Sirach elegantly personifies wisdom.—See Lowth's *Prælectiones*, 13.

— *make proclamation*—קרא, intransitively, *to proclaim, to make proclamation*.

— *And understanding*—תבונה is applied to the wisdom or prudence of man in a great number of passages; and to the wisdom or understanding of the Deity in ch. iii. 19, (and, perhaps, ch. ii. 6;) Job, xii. 13, xxvi. 12; Ps. lxxviii. 72, cxxxvi. 5, cxlvii. 5; Isaiah, xl. 14, 28; Jer. x. 12, li. 15.

2. *She taketh up her station*—She stands on the tops of high places of whatever description, near the public ways, in order to be heard by as large a concourse of people as possible. נצב seems to denote continuity of action, Gen. xxxvii. 7; Exod. vii. 15, xxxiii. 21; Ps. xlv. 9, which Bishop Horsley renders “on thy right hand the consort has her station;” Judg. xviii. 16, and other places.

— *In the paths*—בית in or among, “inter semitas,” Noldius; ἀναμεινον, LXX. Doederlein explains it differently, “Mihi quidem domus semitarum videntur publica quasi diversoria dici, hospitum excipiendorum gratia juxta vias publicas instructa.”—Scholia in loc.

4. *To you, O men, &c.*—By “men” Aben Ezra understands rich men, and by “the sons of men” the poor; and many commentators do the same. See Gousset, *Lex.* in אדם.

5. *O ye simple, exercise prudence*—The simple are exhorted to exercise prudence, and to apply attention to the dictates of wisdom. The Hebrew, literally rendered, is,

“O ye simple, cause *your* sagacity to learn;
And, ye fools, cause *your* heart to learn.”

6. *excellent things*—As נגד, in Hiph. means *to declare, to manifest*, נגידים may signify *clear, manifest things*, and the Syriac and Targum render it “truth:” or, as נגיד denotes *a ruler, a chief*, it may signify *dignified, excellent things, principibus digna*; *σεμνα*, LXX; *ηγεμονικα*, Symmachus and Theodotion; “*de rebus magnis*,” Vulgate.

— *And the opening*—מפתח may be the particle Ben. Pih. and Durell, taking מ in מִשְׁרִים for a preposition, renders the hemistich, “and I will open my lips with equity,” which coincides, in sense, with the authorized version.

7. *shall speak truth*—The verb הנה not only means *to speak, to utter*, but likewise *to meditate*, and so it is understood here by LXX, Syr. Targ. Vulg.; but its being joined with “mouth,” and the second hemistich, limit it to the former.

8. *Righteous*—Literally, “in righteousness,” בצדק; but the Hebrews used a substantive with a particle prefixed for an adjective, of which examples may be found in Buxtorf, Thesaurus, p. 338; Schroeder, Instit. reg. 18, 19; Robertson's Gram. p. 298; Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 29, ed. Dathe.

— *crooked*—נפתל, from פתל *to twist*, means *crooked, tortuous*; *σκολιον*, LXX; *περιπεπλεγμενον*, Aquila, Theodotion; “winding,” Hodgson.

9. *They are all plain, &c.*—Personified Wisdom had previously exhorted the simple to exercise prudence, and the foolish to be of an understanding heart; (ver. 5;) she calls upon them to listen to her words, (ver. 6,) for they are true (ver. 7,) and righteous (ver. 8.) They are also “plain to him that understandeth,” that exercises his sagacity to understand them; “and right to them that find knowledge,” *i. e.* that

seek after knowledge, or endeavour to find it.—See Cocceii Lex. נִבְח.

10. *fine gold*—Michælis (Suppl. ad. Lex. No. 861) supposes that חָרוֹץ *fine gold*, originates from the Greek χρυσος, introduced by the Phœnicians, who had commercial intercourse with the Grecian states. It is not to be found in the other Oriental dialects; and it first occurs Ps. lxxviii. 14, but often afterwards in the Proverbs. Whatever may be the derivation of the word, there can be no doubt about its signification; and, as Michælis observes upon another word, “De etymo non laboro, dummodo de vera nominis significatione constet.”

11. *For wisdom is better than gems*—As personified Wisdom is still continuing her address, the wisdom here mentioned must mean the maxims and decisions, the instruction and knowledge, which she affords, and which, in ver. 19, are called “her fruit;” whereas, in the parallel passage, ch. iii. 15, wisdom itself is meant, wisdom in the abstract, though elegantly personified as in this chapter. The value of wisdom and understanding is beautifully described in Job, xxxviii. 12—19, on which place Schultens says, “Infinita est sapientiæ dignitas, maria et terras præponderans.”

12. *I Wisdom dwell with prudence, &c.*—The Paroemiast now takes a bolder flight, upborne on the wings of inspiration, and soars to the contemplation of Primæval Wisdom, the eternal, hypostatic Word. From considering the excellence of wisdom, the transition is easy to the undefiled Source of it: abstract wisdom now disappears; and the inspired writer proceeds to the delineation of a divine Being, who is portrayed in colours of such splendour and majesty as can be attributed to no other than the eternal Son of God. The appellation of “Wisdom” forms no objection against inter-

preting the passage of the second Person in the Trinity, for he is so denominated 1 Cor. i. 24, 30; Luke, xi. 49, as appears from comparing Matt. xxiii. 34.—(See Schleusneri Lex. σοφία, 5.) The primitive fathers styled the Son “Wisdom,” or the “Wisdom of God,” and used it as a title by which he was commonly distinguished. This is too evident to admit of contradiction. It was even so well known an appellation of our Lord as to be introduced into some of the ancient creeds; for in that of Gregory Thaumaturgus he is styled σοφία υφ’εστωσα, Substantial or Subsisting Wisdom; (Opera, p. 1, Paris, 1622;) and in that of Lucian, Presbyter of the Church of Antioch, who suffered martyrdom about A.D. 309, he is called “the Word,” “the Wisdom,” &c.*—(Socrates, lib. ii. cap. 10.) It is true, they likewise occasionally designated the Holy Spirit by the same name; but, as the learned Bull remarks, “Veteres secundæ et tertiæ Personæ, ob communem utrique tum naturam, tum ab eadem πηγη θεοτης derivationem, etiam nomina fecisse communia. Hinc, ut secundam υποστασιν aliquando *Spiritum Dei* vocant, quo tertiam frequentius designant; ita nomine σοφιας nonnunquam tertiam Personam indigitant, quo tamen secundam, ως επι το πολυ, notare solent.”—Defens. Fid. Nic. sect. 2, cap. iv. § 10, ed. Grabe. See Petavius, de Trin. lib. vii. cap. 12, p. 17.

— *dwell with prudence*—Literally, “I inhabit prudence, or discernment,” denoting the intimate union and familiarity between Wisdom and discernment; and very expressive of Him “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and know-

* The genuineness of this creed of Gregory’s has been questioned by Lardner (Credibility, vol. iii. p. 49, ed. 8vo.) and others; but is defended by Bull, (Def. F. N. § 2, cap. 12,) Fabricius, (Bibl. Græc. vol. v. p. 249,) and others. Lucian’s, also, has been disputed.—(Lardner, *ibid.* p. 331.) A collection of the ancient creeds may be seen in the indefatigable Bingham, *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, lib. x. cap. 4.

ledge.”—(Col. ii. 3.) Thus *οικew* is used by St. Paul, 1 Tim. vi. 16, where God is said *φως οικων απροσιτον*, to dwell in light inaccessible, that is, surrounded with unapproachable majesty and splendour. Sin is said to be *οικουσα εν εμοι*, (Rom. vii. 17,) and in ch. viii. 9, of the same epistle, it is said *Πνευμα Θεου οικει εν υμιν*.

— *I present*—*אמצא* seems to be put for *אמצי* in Hiph. as the characteristic *י* is often omitted, and may be literally rendered “I cause to find,” *i. e.* I offer or present the knowledge of discreet things to such as request it. “I teach,” Hodgson; “penetro,” Schultens, who remarks, “Non satis dignum visum, ut Summa Sapientia dicatur *invenire*, quod tanquam perennis Fons possidet. Aliis eadem de causa placitum, *præsentem habeo*. Mihi *invenio* valet hic *intime penetro*.” In confirmation of the translation I have given, it may be remarked, that this word occurs in Hiph. without the Jod, in the sense of *presenting*, Levit. ix. 12, 18, and in the sense of *causing to find*, Job, xxxiv. 11.

13. *The fear of Jehovah*—Instead of *יראת* and *שנאת*, Durell, Dimock, Doederlein, and Dathe would read *יראתי* and *שנאתי*, viz. “I fear Jehovah, I hate evil;” a most unwarrantable alteration, since it is contrary to all the manuscripts and versions. Nor is the textual reading either frigid or unseasonable, as they suppose. Wisdom declares “the fear of Jehovah is to hate evil;” therefore “pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the perverse mouth do I hate;” that is, when I discover these odious qualities in men, they incur my displeasure; a sentiment very appropriate to the Son of God.

— *do I hate*—From verse 12 to the end of the chapter, at least to the 31st verse, the discourse, undoubtedly, turns upon the same subject, whatever it may be that is included

under the term Wisdom. Now, according to the principles laid down in the introductory remarks, it must mean, either an attribute of God, or a Person in the Divine Essence. We might say, "the justice of God, or the purity of God hates iniquity;" but to aver that his "wisdom hates it" would, surely, be improper. We may therefore conclude, that this verse is to be regarded as coming from a divine Person.

It is not intended to deny, that some of the verses included in verses 12--22 *may* be applied to abstract wisdom personified; but still it may be justly asserted, that they are *more* suitable to Christ. As the author proceeds, however, he gives still clearer indications of the personage depicted in this portion of Scripture, till he accumulates such a variety of marks and characters, as, in my apprehension, leave no doubt that the divine Logos is the subject.

14. *Counsel is mine, &c.*—The same sentiment and nearly the same words occur Job, xii. 13, there spoken of God, and, being here applied to Wisdom, show that a divine Person is meant.—(See Gill's Bible.) "It must be granted," says Dr. Jamieson, "either that a person is meant, or that an attribute may be the subject of an attribute; nay, that a thing may be predicated of itself. Does not the reader learn a great deal, by being informed that 'wisdom belongs to wisdom?' Nor is it much better to say, in this sense, *I have strength*. Is power an attribute of the attribute of wisdom?"—Vindication of the Deity of Christ, lib. i. cap. 9.

— *I am understanding*—So אני בינה is rendered by E. T. Merc. Cast. Piscat. Cartw. Pagn. Mont. Michael.; but the Polyglott versions render it "understanding is mine," having, probably, read לי instead of אני, and they have been followed by many modern translators. The version of Schultens is, "Ego Prudentia meam aio potentiam," like אני חכמה in

ver. 12. Whether we choose to translate it, "I understanding," or "I *am* understanding," the sense is much the same; and in either case Wisdom is called *בִּינָה*, a word which occurs thirty-seven times, and never applied to the wisdom or understanding of God, but invariably to that of man. This, however, does not militate against the interpretation of the passage here proposed; for the Son of God may be called "Understanding," in as much as he is the author of it in man; in the same way as our blessed Lord calls himself "the resurrection and the life," (John, xi. 25,) and as he is styled by the apostle to be made of God unto us "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," (1 Cor. i. 30,) that is, the author of these blessings. Such metonymical expressions are very common in the sacred writings. It may be observed, that some suppose *בִּינָה* properly means the power of discerning and judging of things aright. "Inter חכמה et בינה distinguunt ita, ut illud sit lux et cognitio rerum, quæ dicitur *sapientia*, hoc vero iudicium, quod ex hac sapientia oritur, quo inter res discernimus, quod Græci *διαγινωσκω* vocant, et Latini *intelligentiam*, seu *prudentiam*."—Rosenmuller, Scholia in Isaiah, xi. 2.

15. *By me kings reign*—It is unquestionably true, that monarchs cannot reign happily, nor discharge their royal duties so as to promote the public welfare, without wisdom; and the impossibility either of a long or prosperous reign, without wisdom and moral rectitude, is a doctrine frequently inculcated in the book of Proverbs.—(Ch. xvi. 12, xx. 28, xxviii. 16, xxix. 2, 4, 14.) But the language in this verse has a higher and more important meaning. There is no mention of reigning long or prosperously. Wisdom says, without limitation, "by me kings reign;" their power, however used, is derived from me; an expression strictly applicable to Him, "to whom all power is given in heaven and in earth."—(Mat. xxviii. 18.)

“He removeth kings, and setteth up kings;” (Dan. ii. 21;) “for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God.”—(Rom. xiii. 1. Compare Deut. i. 13, xvii. 14, et seq.) It cannot be denied that the sovereign power is ordained of God; but Wisdom asserts, “by me kings reign:” Wisdom, therefore, is God, God the Son.

16. *By me princes rule, &c.*—This, like the preceding verse, cannot be predicated of an attribute, but must be referred to the Son, by whom God made the world, and by whom he governs it, having committed all power unto him.—Ephes. i. 22; Heb. ii. 7, 8; 1 Cor. xv. 27; John, iii. 35, v. 20, 22, xiii. 3, xvii. 2; Mat. xxviii. 18, xi. 27; Luke, x. 22.

—*are illustrious*—נדיבים *noble, princely, illustrious*, (see Simonis, Lex.) agreeing with כל שפטי ארץ *all the judges of the earth*. “Illustresque sunt omnes orbis præsides,” Castalio: to the same purpose Munster, the Tigurine Version, and Le Clerc. It is by the appointment of the Supreme Ruler that judges are revered, and looked up to with respect.

17. *I love those that love me*—To love is a personal act; and though it may, perhaps, by a bold figure, be applied to a personified attribute, it seems properly to belong to a person. For אהביה the Keri has אהבי; but the final ה may be paragogic.—(See Storrii Observat. ad Analog. et Syntax. Heb. p. 438.) אהב is the future, contracted for אאהב.—See Altingii Fundam. Punct. Ling. Sanct. p. 442.

18. *Riches, &c.*—Wisdom is said to be possessed of “riches and honour;” (ch. iii. 16;) and this verse may, undoubtedly, be predicated of an attribute; as, for instance, St. Paul speaks of “the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God,” (Rom. xi. 33,) and of “the riches of his goodness,” (Rom. ii. 4,) and of “the riches of his grace,” (Ephes. ii. 7.) It may, nevertheless, be appropriately

applied to the Son, whose "riches," the apostle says, are "unsearchable," (Ephes. iii. 8,) who received from God "honour and glory," (2 Pet. i. 17,) and "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," (Col. ii. 3.)

Even durable wealth].—The radical meaning of עָרַק is to remove, Gen. xii. 8, xxvi. 22; Job, ix. 5, xiv. 18, xviii. 4, xxxii. 15; "they removed speaking from them," *i. e.* they left it off, Isaiah, xxviii. 9. In Hiph. to cause to remove, as, for instance, into a particular place, Prov. xxv. 1, "which the men of Hezekiah collected," caused to remove, "nempe ex suis libris in hunc librum."—(Cocc. Lex. ed. Schulz.) 2. *To grow old, veterascere*, to continue removing, or going on, (such is its meaning in Syriac, Chaldee, and Arabic,) Job xxi. 7; Ps. vi. 8, "mine eye waxeth old," *i. e.* grows dim, like the eyes of the aged, "because of all mine enemies," on account of the grief which they occasion me. (The Chaldee עָרַק *ancient*, occurs Dan. vii. 9, 13, 22.) Hence as a noun, 1st. *lasting, durable*, Prov. viii. 18; Isaiah, xxiii. 18: 2d. *stiff, hard, harsh*, being qualities attendant on age, and generally belonging to durable things, 1 Sam. ii. 3; Ps. xxxi. 18, lxxv. 6, xciv. 4. In 1 Chron. iv. 22, it may be the name of a place, as Parkhurst observes. These are all the places wherein this root occurs, and, surely, they are explained in an easy and perspicuous manner, without having recourse to remote and far-fetched senses, drawn from the dubious sources of the kindred languages. Yet, because عَدَق in Arabic means *pulchritudo, nitor*, Schultens would superinduce this idea in Isaiah, xxiii. 18, מְכַסֶּה עֵרִיק "durable clothing;" "non solum *durable*," says he, "ut dari solet, verum etiam *nitoris integri, et cujus pulchritudo non præflorata*;" and this notion is adopted by Dathe and Rosenmüller.

— *and righteousness*].—Aben Ezra takes צְדָקָה to mean "happiness or prosperity." Doederlein thinks it may be

opposed to הון שקר *fallacious wealth*: ο μαμμωνας της αδικιας (Luke, xvi. 9) means *perishable riches*, and, by parity of reason, the “mammōn of righteousness” may mean *certain, permanent riches*; הון צדקה, therefore, may denote *certain wealth*: and this clause is rendered “opes firmæ et solidæ” by Doederlein; “opes perennes et duraturæ” by Dathe. According to this, the verse may be translated,

Riches and honour are with me,
Even durable and certain wealth.

19. *even solid gold*—וזהב, חרוץ, כתם, סגור, פו, בצר, all signify *gold*: there must be some distinction, for so many words can scarcely be quite synonymous; but I have not been able to ascertain the difference satisfactorily to myself.—See Michaelis, Supplem. ad Lex. Heb. No. 597.

20. *I march in the way, &c.*—That is, my proceedings are in righteousness and justice. Dr. Hodgson gives a Hiphil sense to the verb, “In the path of virtue I cause men to walk.”

21. *That I may cause, &c.*—Wisdom proceeds in the way of righteousness and equity, for the purpose of making those who love her to inherit, not frail, perishable wealth, but true, spiritual riches, and of rendering their enjoyment of them full and complete. This is strange language to be spoken of an attribute; but strictly applicable to the Son of God, through whom we are partakers of the riches of his grace; (Ephes. i. 7, ii. 7;) through whom we are made rich, (2 Cor. viii. 9,) rich in the possession of spiritual blessings; and through whom alone we can receive “forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in him.”—Acts, xxvi. 18.

22. *Jehovah possessed me the Beginning of his way*—This version is supported by LXX, Aq. Sym. Theod. and is

approved by Aben Ezra, Cocceius, Schultens, Michaëlis, Gill, &c. As this and some of the following verses are of the utmost consequence in determining the correctness of our interpretation, they demand a minute and critical examination.

— *possessed*—יָנִי “possedit me,” Vulgate; ἐκτησατο με, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion; that is, possessed me by right of paternity and generation, as is evident from verses 23, 24, 25; and this verb is, undoubtedly, applied to possession by generation Gen. iv. 1.—(Compare Deut. xxxii. 6.) The Father possessed the Son, had, or, as it were, acquired him by an eternal generation; and the same circumstance, the eternal filiation of the Son, is declared in Micah’s famous prophecy by the phrase, “whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”—(Mic. v. 2. See Matt. ii. 6; Bishop Chandler’s Defence, ch. ii. p. 150.) But יָנִי is rendered בָּנִי *creavit*, in the Syriac; בָּרָא *creavit*, in the Targum; and, in the same sense, ἐκτίσε με, in the LXX. By this expression of the LXX, the Arians justified themselves in classing the Son among created beings; “verum antiqui Patres, qui ante concilium Nicænum vixere, per vocabulum κτισσεως, non eam solum creationem quæ ex nihilo fit, sed omne genus productionis intellexerunt, ipsamque adeo generationem Verbi.”—(Valesii Not. in Eusebii Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. cap. 26.) Many, indeed, understood this passage as relating to the human nature of Christ; (Suiceri Thesaur. υἱος, iii. 3;) but in this they were clearly mistaken, since Wisdom expressly declares, that she was born before the earth and its furniture existed. Πολλαχου δε των θειων λογιων γεγεννησθαι, ἀλλ’ οὐ γεγονεναι τον υιον λεγομενον ευροι τις αν. υφ’ ων καταφανως ελεγχονται τα ψευδη περι της του Κυριου γεννησεως υπολαμβανοντες, οι ποιησιν, αυτου την θειαν και αρρητον γεννησιν λεγων τολμωντες. “In many places of the sacred Oracles,” says Dionysius Romanus, “the Son is said to be born, but

nowhere to be made; wherefore they entertain false opinions concerning the generation of our Lord, who dare to call his divine and unspeakable generation a creation.”—(In Routh’s *Reliquiæ Sacræ*, vol. iii. p. 182.) It is not improbable, that the present text of the LXX is corrupt, and that the true reading should be *εκτῆσατο*.—See Schleusneri *Opuscula*, p. 306.

— *the Beginning*—*רשית* means the *origin* or *cause* ch. xvii. 14; Jer. xlix. 35; Mic. i. 13, as it does in the passage before us; and is very characteristic of the divine Logos, who was the Beginning, the Origin, the efficient Cause, and Creator of all things; for “all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.”—(John, i. 3. See Ephes. iii. 9; Col. i. 15—17; Heb. i. 2, 10; Rev. iv. 11; Waterland’s *Sermons at Lady Moyer’s*.) The Son of God is called the “Beginning” Rev. xxii. 13, perhaps i. 8, though Griesbach omits *αρχη και τελος* on very respectable authority; but in Rev. iii. 14, he is denominated *η αρχη της κτισεως του Θεου*, which is parallel to Prov. viii. 22, and may, indeed, be rendered, “the Lord of the creation of God,” but seems rather to mean “auctor initii,” the efficient cause or author of the creation.—(See Wolfii *Curæ* and Rosenmulleri *Scholia* in loc.) He is also styled the “Beginning” Col. i. 18, where some suppose *αρχη* relates to his being “the first-fruits of them that slept;” (1 Cor. xv. 20;) others to his being the efficient cause and ruler of the church, among whom are Estius and Macknight; others, with more propriety perhaps, to his being the creator and cause of all things.

In the strict acceptance of the word, the Father alone can be called *αρχη*, as being God, not of any other, but of himself, and as he is the cause and origin even of the Son’s divine essence. “The ancient doctors of the church,” says the

learned Bishop Pearson, “have not stuck to call the Father the origin, the cause, the author, the root, the fountain, and the head of the Son, or the whole Divinity.”—(On the Creed, p. 63, Oxon. 1797, where he has accumulated abundance of authorities in the notes. See also Clarke’s *Scrip. Doct. of the Trinity*, part ii. § 9; Bull, Def. § 4; Suiceri *Thes. αρχη*.) Yet the sacred writers have given the appellation of *πρωτος, αρχη*, to the Son, in regard to his being the efficient cause and creator of the universe; and the ancient fathers have not scrupled to denominate him by the same term. Thus Clemens Alexandrinus calls the Son *τον αχρονον και αναρχον, αρχην τε και απαρχην των οντων*; (Strom. lib. vii. p. 700, C;) and in another place he says, *αρχη θεια των παντων ην και εστιν*, scil. *ο Λογος*.—(Admonit. ad Gent. p. 5, D.) Tatian uses the same term, *την δε αρχην Λογου δυναμιν παρεληφμεν*: that by *Λογον δυναμιν* is meant the Word, is proved at large by Bull.—(Def. Fid. Nic. § iii. cap. 6.) At the end of the same paragraph Tatian says, *τουτον* (scil. *Λογον*) *ισμεν του κοσμου την αρχην*, “we know that the Word is the Beginning,” *i. e.* the Principle or Cause of the world.—(Orat. ad Græc. § 7, ed. Worth.) Theophilus Antiochenus also observes concerning the Son, *ουτος λεγεται αρχη*; and immediately after, *ουτος ον ων πνευμα Θεου και αρχη, και σοφια, και δυναμις υψιστου*.—(Ad. Autolyc. lib. ii. p. 88, C.) Eusebius characterizes him by the same appellation, *αρχην των γενητων απαντων*, “the Beginning or Principle of all created beings.”—(Præp. Evang. lib. vii. cap. 12, also cap. 15.) The same term is applied to him by Justin Martyr.—(Dial. cum Tryph. p. 367, D. Colon. 1686.) So the verses “*Incerti Auctoris*,” printed among the works of Tertullian, (Op. p. 638, ed Rigalt),

“*Hic Deus, hic et homo verus, verumque locutus,
De Patre principium, genitum de lumine lumen,
Spiritus et Verbum, Patris sub imagine virtus,
Cum Patre semper erat, unitus gloria et ævô.*”

If this interpretation should not be admitted, though it appears the true one, and ראשית be taken in the sense of *beginning, commencement*, as it signifies Gen. x. 10; Deut. xi. 12; Eccles. vii. 8; Jer. xxvi. 1, xxvii. 1, xxviii. 1, xlix. 34; then "Jehovah possessed me the Beginning of his way" will refer to the eternal generation of the Son, who was πρωτοτοκος πασης κτιστος, (Col. i. 15,) "begotten before every creature," that is, before any created being had existence.—(Middleton on the Greek Article in loc.) For to call the attribute wisdom "the commencement of God's operation," is totally unwarranted by other texts of holy writ; and, as far as we can judge on a subject so far exalted above us, would be an assertion irreconcilable with all our notions of the Deity. God did not generate or produce wisdom; it is essential to his very nature; and can, in no respect, be called the beginning or commencement of his way or operation.

If ראשית be taken in the signification of *chief* or *principal thing*, as ch. iv. 7; 1 Sam. ii. 29; Dan. xi. 41; Amos, vi. 1, 6; Ps. lxxviii. 51, cv. 36, it may refer to the filiation of the Son, who may be called the *chief* of God's operations, in as much as he was generated from all eternity, and the whole undivided essence of God was communicated to him. Or it may be explained of his being appointed by the Father *chief* or *head* over all his works: which interpretation is generally adopted by the ancient fathers, as may be seen in the passages referred to at the end of the chapter, particularly Eusebius, de Eccles. Theol. lib. iii. cap. 2. This gives no countenance to the Arian notion of a creature, and is not unsuitable to Him to whom all power is given in heaven and in earth, and by whom all things consist, (Matt. xxviii. 18; Col. i. 17; Waterland's Second Defence, Qu. 12,) but is wholly inapplicable to wisdom as a quality, for how can an attribute be head, chief, or principal thing?

If the word be even understood in the sense of *first-fruits*, as Lev. ii. 12, xxiii. 10; Deut. xviii. 4, xxvi. 10, xxiv. 40; Jer. ii. 3; Ezek. xx. 40, though it may be thought, in some degree, to favour the Arian tenets, yet it may equally refer to the filiation of the Son, who is the “first-begotten,” (Heb. i. 6,) “the first-born of every creature,” (Col. i. 15.) At least, the expression, in this sense, cannot be applied to an attribute; for the wisdom of God cannot, in any way, be the *effect* of his operations. The attributes of the Deity are coeternal with his essence; they cannot be separated from it; and, therefore, cannot be the result or produce of his operations. Hence, in whatever sense ראשית may be taken, it is to be referred to the second Person in the Trinity; though the first, namely, that of *author, principle, cause, or efficient creator*, appears to be its true meaning in this verse.

— *of his way*—Some of the preceding observations rest upon the meaning here attributed to דרך. This word is applied to the operations and proceedings of God Deut. xxxii. 4; 2 Sam. xxii. 31; Ps. xviii. 31, lxvii. 3, Heb.; Dan. iv. 37, &c. The Behemoth is called ראשית דרכי אל “the chief of the operations of God,” *i. e.* his most excellent work in the animal creation.—(Job, xl. 19, Heb.) In Ps. ciii. 7, God’s “ways” are explained, in the second hemistich, by his “acts.” דרכו *his way*, then means the operation, working, or proceeding of God, not referring, I apprehend, to that eternal operation in which the Father communicated his essence to the Son by way of generation, but to his work of creation; and it is so understood by the Targumist, the Syriac translator, Cocceius, Dindorf, Parkhurst, and many commentators. Now God’s attribute of wisdom cannot have been the *beginning* or *commencement*, nor the *first-fruits*, nor the *chief part* of creation; for this supposes it to have been produced at the creation, which is evidently absurd. Neither

was it the *efficient cause* of the creation; for his other attributes of mercy, beneficence, and omnipotence equally shared in the stupendous work of creation. The verse therefore means, THAT JEHOVAH POSSESSED, BY AN ETERNAL GENERATION, WISDOM, OR THE SON, WHO IS THE ORIGIN OR EFFICIENT CAUSE OF ALL THE WORKS OF GOD.

Thus, in whatever way this passage can be *grammatically* rendered, it must be referred to the second Person in the blessed Trinity. I say *grammatically* rendered; for our authorized version, "The Lord possessed me *in* the beginning of his way," is wholly inadmissible; because, 1st. In every other place where ראשית signifies the *beginning* or *commencement*, the particle ב is prefixed, namely, Gen. i. 1; Jer. xxvi. 1, xxvii. 1, xxviii. 1, xlix. 34; and had such been its meaning here, it would scarcely have been omitted. 2d. The English translation is opposed by the LXX, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion; though it must be acknowledged, that the Vulgate, the Syriac, and the Targum have "in the beginning;" but בראשית in Gen. i. 1, was anciently understood to mean the divine Logos; (Suiceri Thesaur. *αρχη*; Ainsworth on Gen. i. 1;) and accordingly the Jerusalem Targum renders it ברוכמא "by Wisdom," meaning the Logos, or Christ, for in ver. 27 it is said, that the Logos, or Word of Jehovah, created man after his image, thereby identifying "Wisdom," *Chukma*, with the Logos, *Memra da Jehovah*. It is, therefore, not altogether improbable, that the authors of the Latin, Syriac, and Chaldean translations understood it as referring to Christ, viz. Jehovah had Wisdom in the beginning of his work of creation, as the efficient cause. Without building much upon this, we have, at least, all the Greek versions in the opposite scale, and if the authority of the ancient translators cannot be pleaded in favour of the rendering above given, it is, undoubtedly, not against it. 3d. It is contrary to all the rules of just interpretation to consider any phrase as elliptical, when it yields a

good and apposite meaning without supplying other words ; whereas the English translators have unnecessarily supplied the preposition “in,” while the version here given is literal and grammatical.

On the other hand, the reasons alleged in favour of the translation, “The Lord possessed me *in* the beginning of his way,” are of little weight. Among the arguments produced by Gousset (*Comment.* ראש, L. 2) only one deserves any reply ; wherein he remarks, “*dura est locutio קנני ראשית* possedit me primitias, (sine *אח* quod juxta Zachar. xii. 10, interponi debet post pronomem,) talem enim appositionem nominis nudi cum affixo nominis præcedentis non novimus.” To this it may be answered, 1st. That the passage in Zech. xii. 10, is not a case in point, as any one must be convinced by examining the original. 2d. Nouns are often put in apposition without the particle *אח* ; and as pronouns are the substitutes of nouns substantive, they must, from their very nature, admit of the same syntax ; and accordingly we find them put in apposition with nouns without the addition of *אח*, as ver. 4 and 12 of this chapter ; Ps. lv. 14, Heb. ; Isa. xliii. 15 ; Mich. iv. 8, &c. 3d. Instances of apposition similar to this in the verse before us not unfrequently occur ; as 2 Sam. i. 26, *צר לי עליך אחי*, “I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan ;” *ibid.* xviii. 33, “*והיה אבשלום בני בני*, Would God I had died, for thee, Absalom, my son, my son !” 2 Kings, ix. 5, *רבר לי אליך השר*, “I have an errand to thee, captain.” See also Ps. xxv. 1, xlii. 1, lxii. 13, lxxxvi. 4, ci. 1 ; Jer. xv. 5 ; Hos. v. 8 ; Lam. ii. 13 ; by consulting which, in the original, it must be evident that a construction like *קנני ראשית* is not unexampled in the Hebrew volume. When to this are added the objections above mentioned to the version “in the beginning,” we have as strong evidence for the translation here adopted as can generally be obtained in philological inquiries.

After all, should the correctness of the authorized version be maintained, I contend that it is alone applicable to the Son, who “in the beginning was with God, and was God;” (John, i. 1;) who “in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of his hands;” (Heb. i. 10.) To say of the attribute wisdom, that God possessed it in the beginning of his work of creation, is trifling; certainly is too futile an observation to fall from any sensible writer; how, then, can it be attributed to the wise monarch of Israel?

— *Before his works of old*—That is, before the works of creation; before there were any creatures; consequently, Wisdom must have been with Jehovah from all eternity.—See Waterland’s Sermons at Lady Moyer’s, Serm. vii.

— *of old*—מֵעוֹלָם, literally, “ex tunc.” The observation of Vitringa is excellent: “*a tunc*; A quo tempore? A nullo certo. ergo ab omni æternitate cogitabili.”—(Disput. Theol. de Generatione Filii, p. 18.) It is scarcely possible, in the whole compass of the Hebrew language, to select terms more expressive of the eternity of Wisdom than those which Solomon employs from this verse to the thirtieth.

23. *I was anointed from everlasting*—Anointing was a ceremony used by the Jews in the inauguration of kings, priests, and prophets; and an unction is ascribed to our Lord in the Scriptures, because he was appointed and ordained to perform all these offices. He was anointed to the prophetic office, “because the Lord hath anointed him to preach good tidings unto the meek,” (Isaiah, lxi. 1.) He was anointed to the sacerdotal office, for he was “a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek,” (Ps. cx. 4.) He was anointed to the regal office, for Jehovah declares, “I have anointed (נִמְשַׁחְתִּי) my king upon my holy hill of Sion,” (Ps. ii. 6.) Now

the second Psalm is most certainly prophetic of Christ, as may be collected from Acts, iv. 25; Heb. i. 5, v. 5, and from verses 8 and 12 being applicable to no other than the Messiah. In Ps. xlv. 8, a Psalm likewise prophetic of our Lord, (see Heb. i. 9, and Bishop Horsley's admirable Sermons on this Psalm,) it is said, that God hath anointed him "with the oil of gladness," not with the common anointing oil, but with the unction of the Spirit: and St. Peter teaches us that "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power," (Acts, x. 38; see also iv. 27.) Hence Jesus was anointed to be Prophet, Priest, and King, by the effusion of the Holy Spirit; for which reason he is called Christ, or Messiah, appellations which signify *anointed*; and are applied to him by reason of his being anointed to the offices which he actually did and still does perform for the eternal welfare of the human race. It is obvious, then, that this part of Solomon's description is, in a very eminent manner, applicable to our Saviour, since the same expression, in other places, denotes his being set apart, and ordained to the offices he sustains. The grand scheme of redemption in Christ was laid before the world began; (Ephes. i. 4; Col. i. 26; Tit. i. 2; 1 Pet. i. 20;) and when the divine Word is declared to be "anointed from everlasting," the meaning is, that he was preordained, in the immutable decrees of God, to take our nature upon him, and to become a Prophet to instruct us, a Priest to atone for us, and a King to govern and protect us, in order to effectuate the salvation of mankind. For a full discussion of this triple office of our blessed Lord, I refer to Pearson on the Creed, Art. 2, p. 150 et seq.; Kidder's Demonst. of the Messiah, part i. p. 11; Scott's Christian Life, part ii. § 2 et seq.; Suicer, Thesaur. tom. ii. p. 1550.

I am of opinion, however, that it has, moreover, a further reference, even to the Son's origination from the Father. As this anointing is said to have been "from everlasting," it may,

at least in part, refer to the Father's communication of the Divine Essence to the Son by what divines call generation, so that he is the eternal Father of an eternal Son. This, it is true, may appear to some objectionable, as making the verse a mere tautology with the two following verses; and, therefore, they will be inclined to explain it *solely* in reference to the offices which he undertook for the redemption of man, and to which he was ordained in the eternal and immutable purpose of God; for he was "foreordained before the foundation of the world."—1 Pet. i. 20.

Some suppose "to anoint" is a figurative expression, denoting to confer dignity and honour. "Power, dominion, and greatness were given to me," as R. Levi Ben Gersom understands it; and it has been thought, that our Saviour was called the Messiah, or Christ, on account of his being constituted a prince, and invested with power and dominion by the Father.—(Suicer, *ibid.*; Schleusner, *Lex. Χριστος*.) But it appears clearly to me, that his title of Christ is derived from the triple character he sustains of Prophet, Priest, and King, to which offices he was anointed by the effusion of the Spirit.

However the expression may be explained, how can it be said that divine wisdom was "anointed from everlasting?" Can it with any propriety be asserted of an attribute, that it was anointed, invested with power and authority, from everlasting? Is it not absurd to affirm of an attribute, that it was anointed, or ordained to perform an office of any description whatsoever? In what way then, literal or figurative, can the expression be predicated of a quality? But it is strictly applicable to the divine Logos, who was anointed, by the effusion of the Spirit, to perform the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King; who was invested with power and dignity from everlasting; and who from all eternity derived his existence and essence from the Father, for "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" (Col. ii. 9;) he "was in

the beginning with God, and was God," (John, i. 1,) "having neither beginning of days nor end of life," (Heb. vii. 3,) but is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," Heb. xiii. 8.

— *before the world was*—Literally, "from the antiquities of the earth," that is, before its existence, as the following verses prove: so the ancient versions. Schultens renders it, "longe longeque ante terram," and adds, in a note, "Ne satisfacit quidem, *antequam esset terra*. In Hebræo est *ab anterioritatibus terræ*; quod quivis cernit adferre sensum istum, quem in versione proposui."

24. *I was born*—Among the different senses of which הוּלַלְתִּי, the radix of הוּלַלְתִּי, is susceptible, there are only two that can possibly apply in this and the next verse, viz. *to travail, to bring forth, parturire*; and *to form, to produce, formare*.* Neither of these significations, however, can agree with divine wisdom, which never was born, or formed, or produced; but always subsisted as an attribute of the Deity: and, as the sense of *forming, producing, or creating* is wholly unsuitable to the Son, who is eternal and uncreated, I conclude it is applied to him in the sense of *bringing forth*, expressive of his divine and eternal generation. To this effect it is rendered by all the ancient versions, except the Arabic, which is of little or no authority. The Targum, indeed, on ver. 25, according to the Latin translation in the Polyglott, has "condita sum;" but the word אֶחָבְנִית, which is there used, should have been rendered "genita sum."—(See Buxtorf, Lex. Chald. Talm. et Rab. בְּנָה.) Dr. Bernard Hodgson renders it, "I was," and in ver. 25, "I existed;"

* In regard to this, Michælis observes, (Suppl. No. 686,) "Fere omnia quæ pro ea (scil. significatione *formandi*) adferuntur exempla manifeste *parturiendi* notionem habent:" so Dindorf, Lex. p. 933.

and Roell, (Dissert. Altera de Generatione Filii, § 95,) who is greatly perplexed with this passage, as it so strongly militates against his scheme, hesitates between the renderings “fui,” and “formata, h. e. ordinata;” but I find no authority for giving it the sense of *fui, I was*. The version I have given is, likewise, supported by the authority of the most eminent modern translators, commentators, and lexicographers; as Mercer, Geier, Castalio, Piscator, C. B. Michaelis, Schul-tens, Dathe, Hales, (see ver. 25,) Cocceius, Gousset, (Diss. ad Bohl. N. 2, at the end of his Lex.) Simonis, Dindorf, Parkhurst, Vitringa, (de Generatione Filii, p. 16.) Little doubt, therefore, remains that the expression חוללתי refers to the filiation of the Son, who was begotten of the Father before all worlds.

Imperatively called by my duty as a commentator, I must touch upon the doctrine of the Trinity, at once the most interesting and most awful of all topics; on which to multiply words without knowledge is pregnant with mischief, and “to speak unadvisedly” is irreverent and profane. Yet, as the Ministers of the Gospel should not be restrained, through silent timidity, from the avowal of what they regard as celestial truths, I shall briefly state the result of my investigation, in full confidence of its consistency with the sacred writings, and the Formularies of the Established Church.

That *three* distinct Subsistencies or Persons exist in *one* Godhead, is the unanimous voice of the Scriptures and of the ancient fathers. Of these Persons only One can be self-existent and unoriginated, the cause and original of all things, who is denominated God the Father; for a plurality of Persons so subsisting would necessarily infer a multiplicity of Gods. The Scriptures declare, that the Son is really and truly God, coessential and coexistent with the Father; but the Father alone is self-existent and unoriginated; therefore, the Son must have derived his being and essence from the

Father. Now as the Divine Essence, embracing all perfections, is indivisible, the communication of it must be total and plenary, so that the Son is “of one Substance with the Father:” and as the same perfections require us to acknowledge that God is immutable, that what he now is he always was, it follows, that the essence which he had from all eternity, he from all eternity communicated; being always Father as always God; and, therefore, the Son was “begotten from everlasting, the very and eternal God.” But, if the Son were *unoriginated*, it would constitute him a separate, independent, self-existent God, the assertion of which leads directly to the error of Tritheism; since to make three independent co-ordinate Divinities, is to make three separate and distinct Gods. Some subordination, then, there must be in the Trinity; some root, centre, or fountain of Deity; and accordingly we are taught in the sacred writings, that the Son is *of* the Father, God *of* God. Wisdom, by which appellation the second Person in the Holy Trinity is denoted, is expressly said, in the passage under consideration, to be “born;” the title “Son of God” is applicable to Christ only in his divine nature,* and the relation included in it certainly implies derivation; indeed, the whole tenor of Scripture evinces his emanation from the Father, who is represented as the cause and source of all things.

Of the nature and mode of the Son’s origination the human mind can form no conception; the sacred Oracles, however, assure us of the fact; and, as language is the medium of

* That the denomination “Son of God” imports the Divinity of Christ, is most ably demonstrated by the Bishop of Lincoln, (*Elem. of Theol.* vol. ii. art. 2,) by Wilson, (*Illustration of the Method of Explaining the N.T. by the early Opinions of Jews and Christians concerning Christ*, cap. 2 et seq.) by the Bishop of St. David’s, (*Brief Memorial*, p. 78, and Sermon preached before the University of Oxford, 1790,) and by Dr. Jamieson (*Vindication of the Deity of Christ*, lib. iii.)

thought, some word or words must be selected to express this origination, and none are better adapted for this purpose, or more agreeable to Scripture, than the term “Generation;” a term not intended to intimate a physical generation; but to express the unknown manner in which the Son’s eternal personal existence is *in* and *of* the Father. To object, that eternal generation is a self-contradiction, the generator being necessarily prior to the generated, is to apply to the Creator notions derived from the generative process in the creature: whereas, if the Son be a Person in an eternal and immutable Godhead, his personality must have been from eternity; for an origination of it in time is incompatible with the immutability of the Deity. Little dependence, it is granted, can be placed in metaphysical reasonings upon the nature and attributes of the Trinity; our ideas on this abstruse subject have no other firm basis to rest upon than the Scriptures; and as this important, though mysterious, doctrine of the Son’s eternal filiation is revealed in them, we ought to receive it as an infallible truth, without presumptuously attempting to explain a subject so far above the grasp of finite understandings. The fact is certain, the manner incomprehensible. “*Mihi impossibile est hujus generationis scire secretum. Mens deficit, vox silet, non mea tantum, sed et angelorum. Licet scire quod Filius natus sit: non licet discutere quomodo natus sit. Illud negare non licet, hoc quærere metus est.*”—Ambrose, Lib. de Fid. ad Grat. See some excellent observations in Irenæus, *Hæres*, lib. ii. c. 48; Eusebius, *Dem. Evangel.* lib. v. c. 1, p. 213 et seq. de *Eccles. Theol.* lib. i. c. 12. See also Bishop Horsley’s Tracts, p. 513, Dundee, 1812.

From the generation of the Son, his Divinity may be inferred by a just and inevitable consequence; for that which emanates from the great First Cause, after the mysterious manner denominated Generation, must be essentially like him. Generation is the vital production of another in the same nature; the very

idea of it implies identity of nature; what is begotten of God, therefore, must be God; and as hypostatic Wisdom is said to be "born," corresponding with other passages in the sacred writings where the Logos is emphatically called "the Son," "the First-begotten," and "the Only-begotten," Christ must be truly and essentially God. Most of the primitive fathers advance this argument in proof of Christ's real Divinity; (Tertullian, *Apolog.* cap. 21. *advers. Prax.* c. viii. 26; Justin Martyr, *Dial. cum Tryp.* p. 355. D. 357. D. 358. C. D.; Tatian, cap. viii. ed. Worth; Clemens Alex. *Admonit.* p. 68. D.; Novatian, *de Trin.* cap. xi.; Eusebius, *de Eccl. Theol. lib. i. c. 10*;) and as it seems to be absolutely invincible, it has the concurrence of many learned defenders of the faith in subsequent ages.—Pearson on the Creed, vol. i. p. 219 et seq.; Bull, *Def. Fid. Nic.* § 4, c. 2, § 2 and 4.

Though in this Trinity of the Godhead we acknowledge "the Glory equal, the Majesty coeternal," we must not derogate from that priority and preeminence which is due to the Father as the fountain and source of Divinity. "Now that privilege or priority consisteth not in this, that the essence or attributes of the one are greater than the essence or attributes of the other; but only in this, that the Father hath that essence of himself, the Son by communication from the Father."—(Pearson on the Creed, vol. i. p. 59.) And again, "we must not so far endeavour to involve ourselves in the darkness of this mystery, as to deny that glory which is clearly due unto the Father; whose preeminence, undeniably, consisteth in this, that he is God not of any other, but of himself, and that there is no other person who is God, but is God of him. It is no diminution to the Son, to say he is from another, for his very name imports as much; but it were a diminution to the Father to speak so of him: and there must be some preeminence where there is place for derogation."—(Ibid. p. 60.) So Bishop Bull (*Def. Fid. Nic.* § 4, c. 2)

and Dr. Waterland; (Defence, Qu. 13, p. 207, Qu. 19, p. 290, Second Defence, *passim*;) and thus, in the ascription of preeminence to the Father as the source of Divinity, we have the concurrence of three writers, who, for all that constitutes excellence in a theologian, discriminating judgment, sound reason, and profound erudition, have rarely been equalled, never excelled.

Some Trinitarians, it is true, reject the Sonship of our Lord in his divine nature.--(Bryant's Philo Judæus, p. 253; Dr. Adam Clarke's note on Luke, i. 35; Faber's *Horæ Mosaicæ*, vol. ii. § 2, c. 1, Lond. 1818; Roell, *Diss. Theol. de Generatione Filii*.) How the supporters of this hypothesis can avoid either the error of Tritheism, on the one hand, or Sabellianism, on the other, it is difficult to conceive. To assert three co-ordinate Gods, and they must be so, if all are *unoriginated*, is to violate the Unity; to reject a real personal distinction is to subvert the Trinity: it is therefore, in my apprehension, impossible to deny the Son's origination, to deny that he is God of God, "without confounding the Persons," or "dividing the Substance." But yet let not this declaration of my own belief be construed into an impeachment of the faith of those who maintain a different opinion. What candid and reflecting believer in Jesus will refuse the right hand of fellowship to those who worship the Trinity in Unity, though they differ from him, in some particulars, on a point confessedly so mysterious? While the plain, fundamental truth, that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are strictly *divine* and *uncreated*, and yet are not *three* Gods, but *one* God, is received with full assent of the mind, and reverence of the heart, other considerations are of minor importance, and ought not to interrupt the harmony of the Christian church.*

* Dr. Waterland remarks, "that an explicit profession of eternal generation might have been dispensed with; provided only that the

Nevertheless, the denial of the eternal filiation of Christ is, in my judgment, an error, and an error replete with danger, for the refutation of which it should seem sufficient to allege the expressions of the divine Word, (verses 24, 25,)

When there were no depths I was born;

When there were no fountains abounding with water.

Before the mountains were settled,

Before the hills *were*, I was born.

Those, of course, who give into this scheme will endeavour to explain this, either in reference to Christ's being born of a Virgin, which event was immutably predetermined from everlasting in the counsels of God; (see Roell, Diss. Theol. de Generat. Filii, § 63, 64, Diss. Altera, § 94;) or to the external display of our Saviour's powers in the work of creation, which some of the fathers suppose was the thing intended, in the Scripture language, under the figure of his generation.—(Bull, Def. Fid. Nic. sect. 2, c. viii. § 5, and sect. 3, c. ix. § 12; Waterland's Defence, Qu. 8, p. 134; Bishop Horsley's Tracts, p. 63, 261.) Those fathers who refer the Son's generation to his manifestation, or going forth to create the world, as Justin Martyr, Theophilus, Athenagoras, Tatian,

eternal existence of the Logos, as a *real, subsisting Person, in and of the Father*, (which comes to the same thing,) might be secured. If any one, disliking the name or the phrase of *eternal generation*, thinks it better to assert an *eternal Word*, instead of an *eternal Son*, (meaning thereby a distinct Person, and *consubstantial* with God, whose Word he is,) and refers the generation to his first and last manifestation, at the creation and incarnation; there seems to be no farther harm in it, than what lies in the words, and their liableness to be misconstrued, or to give offence."—(Defence, Qu. 8, p. 161.) All that is meant by the eternal generation of the Son is, to express his eternal origination from the Fountain of Deity; and, provided the truth, that the Son is *of* the Father, God *of* God, be secured, the terms employed for this purpose are of little moment. At the same time, it is frivolous to object to or wrangle about a term, when the thing intended by it is acknowledged.

and Tertullian, are, nevertheless, unanimous in asserting both the coeternity of the Son, and his emanation from the Father.

With reverential awe I have ventured upon a subject that far transcends the feeble comprehension of the human intellect, and in the contemplation of which the most exalted mind must confess the impotency of its utmost efforts, and the circumscription of its powers. Culpable is that presumption which would bound beyond the limits of revealed truth, and that impiety which would dare to penetrate the arcana of the Godhead. Far be it from the children of mortality to attempt, with unhallowed touch, to pierce the veil of the sanctuary; rather let them approach the consecrated vestibule with devout humiliation, and, from hearts enraptured with the mercies of redeeming love, pour forth hymns of praise and adoration to the Triune God!

25. *Before the mountains were settled*—*טבע* means “the settling the foundations of the earth, and of the mountains in the chaos, and the setting them fast.—(Taylor’s Concordance.) The LXX is, “before the mountains were founded,” and the Syriac, “before the mountains were established, or made fast.”—(See the Lex. of Simonis and Dindorf.) לפני *before, ante*, Noldius, 4. The reader may not be displeased to see here the version which Dr. Hales gives of ver. 22—25: (New Analysis, vol. ii. p. 399, and Dissertations, p. 253:)

“The Lord got me, *the beginning of his way*,
Before his works of old.
From eternity *was I ordained*, from first,
Long before the earth.
When as yet there were no depths (of the sea,)
I was born:
When as yet there were no fountains springing with water,
Before the mountains were established, before the hills,
Was I born.”

26. *nor the plains*—חוצות *plains* or *fields*, as is evident from Job, v. 10; Ps. cxliv. 13, which the English translators render, “that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands *in our streets*,” it should be *in our plains*. It comes from חוץ *foris*; hence חוצות are those parts that are without, at the outside of the cities, viz. the fields or plains. Michælis refines too much when he observes, that it denotes “*quæ extra terram cultam sunt, i. e. deserta*,” (Supplem. No. 690 ;) though the LXX have ἀουρητους, “uninhabitable places.” Schultens, appealing to the Arabic, renders it “*Quum nondum fecisset terram, et circuitus*,” which is adopted by Dathe, Schulz, and Dindorf. It includes, according to Dr. Hodgson, “the moon, the sun, the planets, the heavens. The globe, and every thing surrounding it, by whatever name called.” Other explications may be seen in Poli Synop.

— *Nor the summits of the dust of the world*—This phrase has occasioned the commentators a great deal of perplexity; but if it be understood as a periphrastic expression for “mountains,” there will be no difficulty whatever; and the parallelism would seem to require this explanation, as it is opposed to “plains” in the first hemistich. Literally rendered, it is “the head or summit of the dusts of the world,” *i. e.* the summits of the dust of the world. This interpretation seems preferable to any other, though it is not perfectly satisfactory. Others may be seen in Poli Synop. and Dimock.

It may be remarked, that this and the preceding verses are conclusive evidence against the eternity of the world.—See Pearson on the Creed, Art. 1, vol. i. p. 94, Oxon. 1797.

27. *I was there*—This implies that Personal Wisdom was executing the work of creation: he was not there as an idle spectator, but as an efficient agent.

— *When he traced out the circle*—This is exegetical of the first hemistich; and the meaning of the verse is, When

God “prepared the heavens, I was there,” his agent and fabricator; yea, even “when he traced out the circle (of the heavens) above the face of the deep.” חוג denotes *the circle or orbit of the heavens*: thus, in Isaiah, xl. 22, “God sitteth upon the circle of the earth,” על חוג הארץ, that is, in the heavens, which surround the earth as with a circle. Also in Job, xxii. 14, “He walketh in the circuit of heaven,” or rather, “upon the circle of the heavens,” חוג שמים. In Job, xxvi. 10, חג is a verb, and correctly rendered by our translators, “He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end,” *i. e.* he hath set them bounds which they shall not pass till the end of the world; but see Schultens on Job. Mr. Good supposes this to be an allusion to the rainbow mentioned Gen. ix. 12, 13, and renders it, “He setteth a bow on the face of the waters,” *i. e.* those waters which constitute the clouds. My reasons for not acquiescing in this interpretation are, 1st. חג is a verb, חוג being the noun. 2d. חג פני מים always, I believe, means the sea, or the deep. 3d. The Vulgate renders it “terminum circumdedit aquis;” and the LXX προσταγμα ἐγυρῶσεν ἐπὶ προσωπον ὑδάτος, which seems erroneously rendered, in the Polyglott Latin version, “præceptum circumdedit super faciem aquæ;” for, as the word προσταγμα often answers to the Hebrew חק, (see Bielii Thesaur.) it was, no doubt, intended to convey the meaning of חק in this place; and, therefore, the LXX may be rendered “terminum circumdedit aquis, vel super faciem aquæ.” However this may be, the version of Symmachus is ὁρον περιεγραψεν, “hath circumscribed a limit;” though the Syriac version certainly favours Mr. Good’s translation.

28. *When he strengthened, &c.*—That is, when he rendered them strong, and, as it were, vigorous, by a constant supply of water. “Perennial fountains,” says the venerable

Clement of Rome, "created for pleasure and health, without ceasing present their breasts to mankind for the support of life."—Ep. ad Cor. § 20.

29. *its limits*—The affix in פִּי may refer either to Jehovah, or הַיָּם *the sea*. I have preferred the latter, agreeably to the Vulgate, &c.—Compare Job, xxxviii. 10; Ps. civ. 9; Jer. v. 22.

30. *Then I, the Fabricator, was by him*—This verse must remove all doubt respecting the personality of Wisdom: it can be applied to nothing but a Person, and to no Person but the eternal Son of God. It is admirably descriptive of the divine Logos, the fabricator or creator of the world; but it would be irrational to give this appellation to an attribute. Omnipotent power, influenced by infinite benevolence, and directed by omniscient wisdom, called the heavens and the earth into existence; but it is incorrect to style the attribute of wisdom the fabricator of the world, for that would be to exclude the other attributes of the Deity, which were equally concerned in the work of creation; nay, it would be even to exclude the Son, who is expressly denominated the Maker of all things.—(See note to verse 22.) While, however, we maintain, that all things were made by the Son, and that "without him was not anything made that was made," (John, i. 3,) let us not derogate from the priority and pre-eminence which is due to the Father. Though we acknowledge the Son to be the efficient Cause of all things, yet the Father is *primarily* Creator. All things are made *by* the Son, but in conjunction *with* the Father; and the Father hath made nothing but *by* the Son.—(1 Cor. viii. 6.) "The Father," says Dr. Waterland, "is *primarily* Creator, as the first in Order, the Son secondarily, as second in Order; and They are Both one *Creator*, as They are One in *Nature*, in *Power*, and in *Operation*. This is the *Catholic* Faith,

which was before *Arianism*; and will be after it."—Sermon 2d, at Lady Moyer's. See Pearson on the Creed, Art. 1, p. 104, Oxon. 1797.

— *the Fabricator*].—This I take to be the proper translation of the word *אָמָן*, which, in Cant. vii. 2, denotes an *artificer, artifex, opifex*. As one plain, unequivocal passage in the sacred writings is sufficient to establish a doctrine; so one perspicuous and indubitable application of a word is sufficient to establish the signification attributed to it. It is objected, that *אָמָן* in Cant. vii. 2, is different from *אָמָן* in the verse before us.—(Noldii Annot. et Vind. No. 1884; Michælis, Notæ Uberiores; Gussetii Lex. in voc. Y. Z.) But the root is manifestly the same; and *אָמָן* is a participial noun, like *חָנוּן* and *רַחוּם* *merciful*, *גִּבּוֹר* *a strong man*, *עֵרוֹם* *a sagacious person*, *גָּדוֹל* *a great man*, &c. Thus, in ch. vi. 5, the noun *יָקוֹשׁ* *a fowler*, and in ch. xxx. 1, the proper name *אֲבוּר*, are similarly formed; and the participle preterite, or *Pahul*, has occasionally an active signification; as, *הַשְׁכֵּנִי* "those that dwell," Judg. viii. 11; *זָכוֹר* "he remembereth," Ps. ciii. 14; *בִּטַּח* "he trusteth," Isa. xxvi. 3. "Notant Hebræi participium præteritum passivæ significationis in Kal, quod Paul vocant, si nominascit, activam significationem inducere."—Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 344, ed. Dathe.

It is not improbable, that *אָמָן* is used in the form of the preterite participle, not Benoni, to indicate the Son's derivation from the Father, being *Θεός εκ Θεου*, though he was the efficient cause or maker of the universe.

In explaining this word in the sense of fabricator, we are supported by the authority of several ancient versions. The venerable LXX is *ἦμην παρ' αὐτῷ ἀρμολύουσα*, "eram penes illum disponens;" the Vulgate is "cum eo eram cuncta componens;" the Syriac and Arabic coincide with the LXX. As to the kindred dialects, *ܐܡܢܐ* in Syriac, and

אומן in Chaldee, denote an *artificer, faber, artifex*. This interpretation has, likewise, been adopted by some of the most distinguished biblical critics, as Schindler, Geier, Glass, Michælis, Dathe, Schulz.

Many commentators, it is true, interpret אמן by *alumna, a nurse-child* or *foster-child*. As these terms, in the literal sense, are neither suitable to the Son nor to an attribute, they must understand them metaphorically for “one well-beloved,” “a darling,” “gestatus in sinu;” implying the being peculiarly beloved, which cannot justly be affirmed of any one of the divine attributes, though very appropriate to “the only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father.”—(John, i. 18.) Nevertheless, this exposition is unsupported by adequate authority; for, except that the root מן sometimes denotes *the bringing up* or *nursing*, there is no evidence that אמן means *a foster-child* or *darling*. As it occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible, it is in vain to appeal to Scripture usage; but the kindred dialects, and all the ancient versions, except that of Aquila, decidedly oppose this interpretation. A different explanation is given in the edition of Simonis, *Lex.* by Eichhorn, namely, “qui firmam in aliquo fiduciam ponit, vel ejus fidei se committit, *dedititius* :” but this, like the former one, does not rest upon sufficient authority.

— *by him*—אִתּוֹ means *apud eum, with him*, yet with him in such a manner as to denote a distinction of Persons, whatever they may be in Essence. “*Hæc vox personalitatem Sapientiæ egregiè declarat, cùm in omnibus locis ubi אִתּוֹ juxta occurrit, quæ sunt 62, nè unus est ubi non designatur ejusmodi vicinitas quæ est inter duo distincta supposita.*”—(Geier.) It exactly corresponds with the Evangelist’s declaration, that the Word was in the beginning *πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*, with God.—(John, i. 1.) But the Logos in St. John’s Gospel

cannot be the same Person *with* whom he was; for, as Epiphanius observes, “ if the Logos was with God, the Logos cannot be he with whom he was, nor can he with whom he was be the Logos;” (Heres. 65;) neither can the Wisdom here mentioned be the same Person *by* or *near* whom he was.

— *his daily delight*].—The root שׂעשׂע is employed when mention is made of children, Isaiah, xi. 8, lxvi. 12; Jer. xxxi. 20; but it does not appear to be peculiarly applicable to them, as some imagine, for it is used several times in the 119th Psalm for delighting in the law and ordinances of God. It is a term expressive of great fondness and affection.

— *in his sight*].—So לפני is rendered by our translators ch. iv. 3, and it implies a distinction of the persons or things spoken of. A quality cannot be לפני *in the sight of* or *before* the substance in which it exists. Wisdom, as an attribute of God, cannot be לפני *in his sight*, but בו *in him*; it is essential to him, and by no boldness of personification can be said to be “ before him,” or “ in his sight;” for that would imply their being separate and distinct things, which they neither are nor can be. An attribute, however personified, must still be considered in reference to its possessor; and to use such terms as imply their separate existence would violate common sense. It therefore follows, that a Person is meant, and that Person, as appears from the first hemistich, is the Son of God.

How suitable the expressions in the latter part of the verse are to the divine Logos will be apparent, when we call to mind the Scriptures in which Christ is represented as the “ only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father;” (John, i. 18;) as “ the beloved Son;” (Matt. iii. 17, xvii. 5; 2 Pet. i. 17;) as “ the beloved;” (John, iii. 35, x. 17; Ephes. i. 6;) as God’s “ dear Son,” or the Son of his love, (Col. i. 13.) But they are wholly incompatible with the notion of an attribute. Can

Wisdom be pronounced the perpetual delight of God, in so emphatic a manner as it is in this passage, without inducing us to think of "the beloved Son?" When Wisdom is represented as rejoicing in his sight, does it not naturally lead us to think of a distinct Person? Is it not inconsistent to affirm of an attribute of God, that it at all times rejoices in his sight? When we add, likewise, that this Wisdom was the "fabricator" of the world, and learn, from other parts of Scripture, that all things were made by the Son, how can we hesitate to regard it as a description of the eternal Logos?

31. *Rejoicing in his whole creation*—When the Triune God had finished the work of creation, he "saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."—(Gen. i. 31.) Every thing answered the end for which it was made, and the almighty Architect viewed his work with pleasure and approbation. He rejoiced in the whole creation; yet his peculiar delight is in mankind, the noblest of his creatures; and when we reflect upon all that he has done for us, his protection, mercy, sanctification, and redemption, we must acknowledge, that although "he is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works," (Ps. cxlv. 9,) yet he has been particularly gracious to man, whom he created "in his image, after his likeness."—(Gen. i. 26.)

— *his whole creation*—תבול does not mean "the cultivated parts of the earth," as some suppose, but the whole world, ver. 26; Ps. xviii. 15, l. 12, lxxxix. 11, xciii. 1; Isaiah, xxxiv. 1; Jer. x. 12, li. 15; though in other passages it has a more restricted sense, as Isaiah, xiii. 11, xiv. 17, xxiv. 4; Ps. xxiv. 1. It is joined with ארץ Ps. xc. 2, and exactly as in the present instance Job, xxxvii. 12, rendered by Dathe and Rosenmuller "per totum terrarum orbem;" and so it should be translated here, "the whole world," or "the whole creation."

The whole world is said to be his, (*i. e.* God the Father's,) on account of the privilege which the Father hath by reason of his divine Paternity. See the note on verse 24.

32. *And now, O children, &c.*—It is not certain whether this and the following verses are spoken by hypostatical Wisdom; or whether the royal sage descends from the contemplation of the eternal Logos, and again introduces abstract wisdom personified. The terms employed are suitable to both; but it seems more probable, that, as the magnificent delineation of the Son was preceded by a personification of wisdom, as it were the harbinger of the mighty Being that was to follow; so, after the disappearance of that august Personage, it is not unlikely that abstract wisdom should be again introduced. As this, however, is a point of minor importance, and as the foregoing interpretation of verses 12—31 is nowise affected by the decision, it may be safely left to the opinion of each individual reader.

33. *And reject it not*—This line seems defective, as Di-mock observes; or rather, perhaps, the verse constitutes only one line, thrown in, as it were parenthetically, between verses 32 and 34.

34. *Watching daily at my gates*—No one can be at a loss about the meaning, but it is not easy to say whence the imagery is taken; whether from the practice of lovers, who watch at the doors of their mistresses; (Job, xxxi. 9;) or of ministers at the palaces of sovereigns; or of pupils waiting at and earnestly frequenting the schools of their preceptors; or of clients who watch at the doors of their advocates and patrons, if such habits of life obtained at the age of Solomon: or whether it is not an allusion either to the door of the tabernacle, where the people of Israel assembled for worship; or to the gates of the temple, where the priests and Levites

watched, Exod. xxix. 42; Ps. c. 4, cxxii. 2.—(See Gill's Bible.) Some translate לשקד and לשמר “ad invigilandum,” “ad observandum,” as Schultens; or “ut vigilet,” as Le Clerc, Michælis, Not. Uber.; but better by the LXX, ἀγρυπνων, τερων.

36. *But he that wanders from me*—חטט, in its primary sense, is *aberrare a scopo vel via*, as in Arabic, conj. 4.—(See Schultens on Job, v. 24, and Opera Minora, p. 14.) Hence חטט means *my wanderer*, i. e. he who wanders from me. Dr. Hodgson says, “when this word is used for *sinning against* it is followed by a preposition;” but it means *sinning against* or *injuring* with an accusative without a preposition ch. xx. 2. The Polyglott versions also render it like our authorized version, “he that sinneth against me;” but they may have understood it elliptically for חטט עלי, as חטט Ps. xviii. 40, for חטט עלי. The meaning of these versions appears to be, That he who sins against wisdom, by rejecting her counsel, and deserting her paths, injures his soul; ἀδικα ψυχην αὐτου, Aquila, Symmachus.

— *love death*—That is, act in the same way as if they loved death; since by wandering from wisdom they subject themselves to misery and death. “Hoc est, ita se gerit, quasi mortem amaret et vitæ præferret; cum a legum neglectu, nihil nisi malum nascatur, et sæpe etiam misera, ac immatura mors.”—Le Clerc.

It may not be improper, at the end of this noble chapter, to recapitulate our conclusions. From some characters attributed to the Wisdom described verses 12—31, and it is only that portion of the chapter to which these observations relate, it was inferred, that it has reference to the Divine Nature; and if so, it must be either an attribute, or one of the Persons in the ever-blessed Trinity. In the course of a

minute examination, several circumstances were pointed out, which can by no means belong to an attribute. An attribute cannot be the *beginning*, origin, or efficient cause of God's operation in the work of creative power; it cannot be *born*; it cannot be *by* or *near* the Deity; it cannot rejoice *in his sight*; it cannot be called the *fabricator* or framer of the world; by all which characters Primæval Wisdom is designated.

On the other hand, after a full investigation, not one single expression has been found incompatible with the character and attributes of the divine Logos; and this would be a most astonishing circumstance, if an attribute had been the subject of the representation. But several ascriptions of personal acts have been discovered, which cannot be accounted for by the nature of figurative language. Thus Wisdom is said to hate, (ver. 13,) to love, (ver. 17,) to have power, (ver. 14,) to appoint kings and princes, (ver. 15, 16,) and we know that "the powers that be are ordained of God."—(Rom. xiii. 1.) Should it still be argued, that some of these may be accounted for on the grounds of Oriental prosopopœia; yet when it is added, that Wisdom was *by* or *near* the Deity, and rejoices in his sight, it must be acknowledged, that these imply a personality which can only belong to a real, subsisting Being.

Some particulars, also, have been discovered, which can only be affirmed of the second Person in the Trinity. As, for instance, Wisdom is declared to have been produced by an eternal generation; (ver. 22, 24, 25;) to have been anointed, set apart and ordained to certain offices, and invested with power and dignity from everlasting; (ver. 23;) and to have been the efficient cause or creator of the world, (ver. 22, 30.) When we reflect, likewise, that our blessed Lord is characterized by similar qualities, and in similar terms, in other places of the holy Scriptures, we are surely justified in the

conclusion, that such a description was designed by the Spirit to carry our thoughts beyond the contemplation of abstract wisdom, even to the coeternal and consubstantial Word.

Our confidence in this conclusion will be strengthened, should it appear to be sanctioned by the authority of Jewish and Christian antiquity. As the subject is important, and the inquiry may be amusing, perhaps useful, I shall endeavour to collect the prevailing sentiments of the primitive ages in regard to the passage under consideration.

The sacred writings of the New Testament offer themselves, in the first place, to our examination, since, if the apostles and evangelists have applied the eighth chapter of Proverbs to our blessed Lord, either by express reference or evident allusion, its application to him will be confirmed by an authority altogether decisive. No express reference, it must be acknowledged, can be found; but it seems to be alluded to in a way which tacitly implies such an application. Our Saviour styles himself the "Wisdom of God" Luke, xi. 49, as is evident by comparing the parallel passage in Matt. xxiii. 34.—(See Wolfi Curæ Philol. in loc.) St. Paul likewise, in 1 Cor. i. 24, calls him the "Wisdom of God." It scarcely admits of doubt, that the apostles, from their familiar acquaintance with, and great veneration for the Hebrew Scriptures, would adopt those titles of Christ by which he is there characterized. Is it not probable, then, in styling him "Wisdom" they alluded to Proverbs, where he is distinguished by that appellation? If this be granted, they certainly understood Solomon's picture of Wisdom as relating to the Son of God. Some, moreover, have thought, that the title of our Lord in the beginning of St. John's Gospel is an allusion to this chapter of Proverbs, that which in the former is called *ο λογος* being in the latter *η σοφια*.—(Campbell's Transl. of the Gospels, note in loc.) While I readily accede to Dr. Campbell's observation, that "there is such a coincidence

in the things attributed to each, as evidently shows that both were intended to indicate the same divine Personage;" I must own, the supposition that the term *Logos* was suggested by that of *Wisdom* in the *Proverbs* rests upon a very slender basis. Upon the whole, these remarks amount to a presumption, that the interpretation here adopted is sanctioned by the authority of the apostles; but it would be injudicious to lay too much stress upon them, as *Christ* may possibly be called *Wisdom* metonymically, without any allusion to the *Old Testament*.

The next appeal must be to the ancient fathers, whose authority it has become too much the fashion to despise. *Infallibility* is not in man; they cannot be held up as always close in argument, correct in judgment, or even unexceptionable in morality; but they who flourished in the first ages, when the stream of traditionary truth was still flowing pure and undefiled, must have known what was the doctrine of the apostles; and, as they appear to have been actuated by a sacred attachment to their religion, and a conscientious regard to truth and virtue, they ought to be considered as faithful interpreters of the general belief; a belief which could scarcely have been corrupted so near its source.*

This, then, is the praise of the ancient fathers; they are unexceptionable witnesses of the primitive faith, and this faith was exempt from material error and mistake. Yet the

* "*Omnes enim confitentur apostolos fidissimos fuisse viros; ac proinde nullos sibi in successores ordinare voluisse, nisi quorum fides et integritas ipsis probatissima esset. Primi itaque apostolorum successores Ecclesiam, cujus regendæ cura ipsis commissa est, illibatam haud dubie et incorruptam conservarunt, atque eodem etiam modo suis ipsorum successoribus tradiderunt, hique aliis, et sic deinceps, ut nihil dubii esse possit, quin per duo saltem vel tria ab apostolis secula, Ecclesia in primitivo suo vigore, atque, ut ita loquar, virginitate floruerit, eodem nimirum statu, quo ab ipsis apostolis relicta fuit.*"—*Beveridge, Codex Canon. Proëm. § 7.*

elder Rosenmuller asserts, that their authority in explaining and confirming the doctrines of religion is nothing.* If this be true, how shall we account for the perversion, or at least misconception, of the doctrines of the Gospel so near to the apostolic era? How happens it that the most learned of the Christian community, in the first ages, were in darkness and error on the most essential matters? Did the apostles and disciples of our blessed Lord both preach and write in vain? If this cannot be believed, the truth could not be lost, or greatly corrupted, during the first centuries; and the works of the fathers are to be considered as the evidences of that primitive creed, which must have been sound in all fundamental articles. Hence it follows, that it is an argument of considerable weight in favour of any doctrine which is proved to have constituted a part of this primitive creed; and that it forms a strong ground for believing, that no tenet can be of *essential importance* which the ancient churches never admitted, or universally rejected.

A distinction, however, is to be made between the doctrines which the fathers deliver as universally adhered to by the orthodox, and the arguments they advance in their support. The tenets they maintain may be true, while they may support them by futile reasoning and erroneous expositions of Scripture. And this is not unfrequently the case; they deliver the articles of the Christian faith with general accuracy; but, in their zeal to promulgate them, they sometimes reason incautiously and inconclusively, and expound the sacred writings in such a way as will not stand the test of more mature criticism. Rosenmuller has endeavoured to prove, and not unsuccessfully, in his *Historia Interpretationis*, that

* “Auctoritatem eorum in religionis doctrina explicanda et confirmanda esse nullam.”—D. I. Georgii Rosenmulleri *Historia Interpretationis Lib. Sac.* 3 vol. 12mo. Hildburg, 1795, 1814, par. 2, p. 255.

the fathers often adopted an allegorical, arbitrary, and preposterous mode of interpretation. This is chiefly observable in their comments upon the Old Testament, as few of them, with the exception of Origen and Jerom, understood anything of the Oriental languages. Candour requires us to make these abatements; at the same time, if it should be found that a particular passage has been interpreted in a particular manner by the fathers who flourished nearest to the apostolic era, as well as by those in subsequent ages, it would be unreasonable not to pay great deference to such an authority; a deference eminently due to the bright ornaments of the brightest period of Christianity.*

That the second Person in the blessed Trinity was meant by Wisdom in the eighth chapter of Proverbs, according to the judgment of the ancient Christian church, appeal may be made to the following writings of the fathers.

Justin Martyr, *Dial. cum Tryp.* p. 284 and 359. Colon. 1686.

Clemens Alexandrinus, *Admonit. ad Gent.* p. 52. Compare

Pædagog. lib. i. cap. 10, p. 128. Paris, 1629.

Tertullian, *Opera*, p. 239 and 503, and other places, ed. Rigalt.

Paris, 1664.

Origen, *Comm. in John*, and *de Princip.* l. i. c. 2, ed. Delarue.

Athenagoras, *Legat.* p. 10. Colon. 1686.

Theophilus Antioch, *ad Autolyc.* lib. iii. p. 88. Colon. 1686.

Cyprian, *advers. Judæos*, lib. ii. cap. 1, p. 31, ed. Fell.

Oxon. 1682.

Lactantius, lib. iv. cap. 6, p. 325, ed. Spark. Oxon. 1684.

Dionysius Romanus, in *Routh's Reliquiæ Sacræ*, vol. iii. p. 181.

Dionysius Alexand. *Rel. Sac.* vol. iii. p. 195.

* "Religio mihi est, eritque, contra torrentem omnium Patrum ac veterum Doctorum S. Scripturas interpretari, nisi quando me argumenta cogunt evidentissima; quod nunquam eventurum credo."—Bull, *Def. Fed. Nic.* sect. 1, cap. 1, § 9.

Epistle of the Council of Antioch to Paul of Samosata, A. D. 269, in Routh's *Reliquiæ Sacræ*, vol. ii. p. 469.*

Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles. lib. i. cap. 2*, p. 8, ed. Valesius. Paris, 1659.

———— *Præparatio Evangel. lib. vii. cap. 12*, p. 321; lib. xi. cap. 14, p. 532, ed. Viger. Colon. 1688.

———— *Demonst. Evangel. lib. v. cap. 1*, p. 211. Colon. 1688; and often in his *Eccles. Theolog.*

It is unnecessary to accumulate more authorities; it may, however, be observed, that Irenæus refers the passage in question to the third Person in the Trinity, the Holy Spirit; (*Advers. Hæres. lib. iv. cap. 37*, p. 331, ed. Grabe, Oxon. 1702;) and that, after perusing the genuine remains of the apostolical fathers, I have not discovered in them any reference, or any certain allusion, to the eighth chapter of Proverbs; but in the interpolated Epistle of Ignatius ad Tarsenses, (§ 6,) and in the Apostolical Constitutions, (lib. v. cap. 20, ed. Coteler,) it is referred to the Son of God. Though Irenæus applies the passage to the Holy Spirit, it is probable that he thought it equally applicable to the Son, for he adduces it to prove, that God made all things by the Word and Wisdom, namely, the Son and Spirit, who always existed with him; but he elsewhere affirms, that God created all things by the Son: (*Hæres. lib. i. cap. 19*, p. 93; lib. ii. cap. 2, p. 117, and cap. 46, p. 172; lib. iii. cap. 8, p. 212, &c.:) hence, in his opinion, there must have been an intimate union between them, and what is attributed to the one, may, in a

* Doubts have been raised whether this Epistle is to be attributed to the council of Antioch, or only to the bishops whose names are prefixed; (see Routh's note, *ibid.* p. 493;) but the title, "An Epistle sent to Paul of Samosata by the orthodox Bishops before he was deposed," implies the whole council, as the learned Routh observes. See also Valesius's note to Eusebii *Hist. Eccles. l. vii, c. 30*, p. 157; and Lardner's *Credibility*, vol. iii. p. 87, ed. 8vo.

certain sense, be attributed to the other;* consequently, the eighth chapter, though referable to the Spirit, is equally applicable to the Son. This, at least, is certain, that he understood the Wisdom described in it to be *σοφία υφ'εσώσα*, a subsisting, personal Wisdom, and not an attribute. Besides, the sense of the primitive church is not to be collected from one or two particular fathers, but from the general testimony of all in conjunction; (Beveridge, *Codex Can. Proëm.* § 5;) and from the authorities above cited, and others which might be produced, it is beyond dispute, that, in the first ages after Christ, this chapter was generally expounded of the Son.

This attestation of the early Christian church, in favour of the interpretation adopted in the notes to this chapter, must be regarded, by the impartial inquirer, as strong corroborative evidence. The authority of the ancient fathers is contemned by those whose ignorance, or indolence, prevents the perusal of their voluminous works; and, before Rosenmüller, they have been virulently attacked by Daille, Barbeyrac, and others; yet there have not been wanting writers of great judgment and profound erudition who have stood up in their defence; as, Cave, Reeves, Beveridge, Zornius, Waterland, who, in the seventh chapter of his *Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, has taken an enlightened view of the question. Notwithstanding the abuse cast upon these ancient and venerable authors, all sects and parties triumph when they can sanction their peculiar notions by such an authority. What strenuous, though ineffectual, efforts did Dr. Priestley make to enlist the primitive Christians on his

* Thus, though he so frequently affirms that God created all things by the Son, he sometimes speaks of the Spirit, "*per quem facta sunt omnia.*"—(Lib. iv. c. 51, p. 354.) He also attributes the Scriptures to the dictation of the Father and of the Son as well as of the Spirit. Compare lib. ii. c. 47, p. 173; lib. iv. c. 23, p. 309, and cap. 24, p. 310.

side? And how might Belsham and his Unitarian coadjutors exult, could they prove that their expositions, or rather perversions, of Scripture had been generally received by the primitive doctors of the church? But such a triumph awaits not the abettors of Unitarian principles; the early fathers were believers in the Trinity; and, in vindicating the Divinity of the Son, they, with few, if any, exceptions, maintain, that he is designated by the title "Wisdom" in the eighth chapter of Proverbs. The supposition, then, is surely not unreasonable, that so unanimous and universal a concurrence in this interpretation was not effected without the sanction of apostolical authority.

Let us now turn our attention to the opinion of the ancient Jews. We cannot expect to discover in their writings the same clear and definite ideas respecting a Trinity in Unity as prevail among those who have enjoyed the light of Christianity; their notions are much more dark and confused; yet they were persuaded of a plurality in the Divine Essence; and Dr. Allix (*Judgment of the Ancient Jewish Church*) has very satisfactorily proved, that the ancient Jewish church had not only a notion of a plurality in the Divine Nature, but that this plurality was a Trinity. To discuss this subject, however, is foreign from my present purpose. The simple question to be examined is, whether the ancient Jews actually applied this delineation of Wisdom to one of the Persons of the Godhead. If this question be decided in the affirmative, it will, indeed, afford a strong confirmation of their belief of a plurality in the Divine Nature; but care is to be taken not to diverge from the point at issue, namely, whether the Jewish doctors understood the eighth chapter of a divine hypostatic Being. I shall produce some convincing evidence to show, that the ancient Jews understood the Wisdom described in Proverbs in a personal sense, and considered it as relating

to the eternal Word, the second Person in the Divine Essence.*

The apocryphal books are, with great reason, rejected by Protestants in deciding controversies of faith; but, though they cannot be regarded as divinely inspired writings, nor, consequently, adduced in proof of any doctrine, (Church Article 6,) yet they serve to show the prevailing sentiments of the Jews at the time in which they were written, and, in some instances, how they interpreted the canonical Scriptures.

The apocryphal book entitled "The Wisdom of Solomon," though much doubt exists respecting its author and the period of its composition, (see Gray's Key,) bears a striking testimony to the personality and divinity of Primæval Wisdom. "For Wisdom," says the author, "which is the worker of all things, taught me; for in her is an understanding spirit, holy, one only, manifold, subtil, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good, kind to man, stedfast, sure, free from care, having all power, overseeing all things, and going through all understanding, pure, and most subtil, spirits. For Wisdom is more moving than any motion; she passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness. For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty; therefore can no defiled thing fall into her. For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the

* It will not follow from this, that the Jews expected their Messiah to be a divine Being, as is maintained by Allix, Pearson, Pococke, Kidder, Whitaker, &c. They may only have looked for a human Messiah, according to the opinion of Basnage and Wilson; or the more learned and sagacious of the Hebrew doctors may have believed, that their Messiah would be both God and man, while the more ignorant expected him to be a mere man.—Bull, *Judicium Ecclesiæ Catholicæ*, cap. 1, § 13.

power of God, and the image of his goodness.”—(Ch. vii. 22—26. Compare Heb. i. 3.) Again, “For she is privy to the mysteries of the knowledge of God, and a lover of his works. If riches be a possession to be desired in this life; what is richer than wisdom, that worketh all things? And if prudence work; who of all that are is a more cunning workman than she?”—(Ch. viii. 4—6.) Again, “Give me wisdom, that sitteth by thy throne: and reject me not from among thy children.”—(Ch. ix. 4. Compare Proverbs, viii. 30.) Again, “And wisdom was with thee: which knoweth thy works, and was present when thou madest the world, and knew what was acceptable in thy sight, and right in thy commandments.”—(Ch. ix. 9. Compare Proverbs, viii. 27—30.) The identity of wisdom described in these extracts with Primæval Wisdom in Proverbs is very apparent; and proves that the author of this apocryphal book understood the Wisdom of the Paræmiast in a personal sense, and as indicative of a divine Person. Should any doubt remain, it will be completely removed by reading chapter x. et seq. in which Wisdom is said to perform several actions, which, in the Old Testament, are expressly attributed to Jehovah. This is so evident, that it becomes unnecessary to adduce any instances. Besides, the Being who is called “Wisdom” in the first ten chapters, is afterwards denominated the “Word,” and, subsequently, the “Lord” or “God;” which demonstrates that the author of the book used the term Wisdom as an appellation of the Logos.

The Son of Sirach certainly refers to Prov. viii. 22, when he makes Wisdom observe, “He created me from the beginning, before the world, and I shall never fail.”—(Ecclus. xxiv. 9.) In the Greek it is *ἐκτίσσε με*, the very expression used in the LXX version of Prov. viii. 22, and, consequently, to be understood in the same way, namely, for production in any manner.—(See the note to Prov. viii. 22.) Wisdom like-

wise is said to be made or created, Eccclus. i. 4, xxiv. 8, and some other places, not only in the Greek, but in the Vulgate and Syriac; but, as this cannot be said of an attribute, we must understand it of the production of Wisdom, or the Word, by generation. I am aware that Dr. Randolph, (Vind. of the Doct. of the Trinity, p. 42,) Grotius, and other commentators interpret this passage of the quality or attribute of wisdom, displayed by the Almighty in the creation of the world and delivery of the Law; but the magnificent terms throughout the 24th chapter evince, that hypostatic Wisdom is there delineated, and, consequently, that the Son of Sirach considered the Wisdom in Proverbs to be the eternal Word. It must be acknowledged, that in our authorized version it is said, "I therefore, being eternal, am given to all my children which are named of him," (ver. 18,) which, it may be thought, properly refers to abstract wisdom. In the New Testament, however, the Son of God is said to be given. —(John, iii. 16; Acts, iv. 12; Gal. i. 4, ii. 20; Ephes. v. 2; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Tit. ii. 14.) But, not to rest the answer upon this alone, it may be remarked, that the phrase objected to is not in the Vulgate, nor Syriac, nor LXX, either in the Polyglott, Grabe's, or Field's edition; and in the Complutensian, which our translators probably followed, it is *διδωμι*, *I give*, not *ἐδίδουμαι*, *I am given*: the received translation is, therefore, most likely erroneous. See the various readings in the 6th vol. of the London Polyglott, and the notes of Flam. Nobilius.

Other sources remain to be consulted, which, upon investigation, yield the same result. Justin Martyr, in arguing with the Jew Trypho, it is reasonable to suppose, cited the canonical books of the Old Testament according to the sense in which they were generally understood by the ancient Jewish church. Now to prove that *αρχην προ παντων των κτισματων ο Θεος γεγεννηκε δυναμιν τινα εξ εαυτου λογικην, ητις και δοξα Κυριου υπο του πνευματος του αγιου καλεται, ποτε δε Υιος*,

ποτε δε Σοφία, ποτε δε Αγγελος, ποτε δε Θεος, ποτε δε Κυριος και Λογος, "in the beginning, before all creatures, God generated a rational Power from himself, which is called by the Holy Spirit the Glory of the Lord, sometimes the Son, sometimes Wisdom, sometimes the Angel, sometimes God, sometimes the Lord, and the Word," (Dial. cum Tryph. p. 284, A. Colon. 1686,) Justin appeals to this very passage of Proverbs; it is therefore probable, that it was referred to the divine Logos by the ancient Rabbins.*

Some fragments of Aristobulus, a Jew who lived at Alexandria about one hundred and fifty years before Christ, are preserved by Eusebius; who, after producing an extract from Philo concerning the "Second Cause," adduces the following one, on the same subject, from Aristobulus: Μεταφεροιτο δ'αν το αυτο και επι της Σοφιας· το γαρ παν φως εστιν εξ αυτης. δια και τινες ηρηκασι των εκ της αιρεσεως οντες εκ του Περιπατου, λαμπτηρος αυτην εχην ταξιν. ακολουθουντες γαρ αυτην συνεως, αταραχοι καταστησονται δι ολον του βιου.

* It has been argued, in like manner, that the interpretations of the Old Testament by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews must have been generally received by the Jewish doctors of the age; for if he had offered any novel expositions they would have had no weight either with the believing or unbelieving part of the nation.—(Macknight's Pref. to Hebrews, § 3. See also Allix's Judgment of the Jewish Church, cap. ii. et seq.) But this *may* certainly admit of dispute, as well as the inference from the passage of Justin cited above; and, in fairness, it must be acknowledged, that Justin says the proofs of his position adduced by him will be strange to Trypho, (ξεναι, Dialog. p. 274, D.) On the other hand, Trypho is not represented as objecting to the application of Prov. viii. 22, to the Logos; but seems to acquiesce in it; (p. 286, B. and 359, B.;) and in one place expressly owns, that all the Scriptures appealed to by the learned father are referable to Christ: εν ισθι οτι και παν το γενος ημων τον Χριστον εκδεχεται, και οτι πασαι αι γραφαι, ας εφης, εις αυτον ηρηνται, ομολογουμεν. (p. 316, E.) The inference, then, is not unwarrantable, that Justin cited the Scriptures according to the ancient Jewish interpretation of them.

σαφεστερον δε και καλλιον των ημετερων προγονων τις επε Σολομων, προ ουρανον και γης αυτην υπαρχεν. “ Let this be transferred to Wisdom ; for all light is from it. Wherefore some who are of the Peripatetic sect have said, that it has the office of a lamp, as those who constantly follow it shall remain without trouble through all their life. But Solomon, one of our ancestors, more clearly and more beautifully said, That it existed before the heavens and the earth.”—(Præparat. Evang. lib. vii. cap. 14.) This is an evident application of Proverbs, viii. 24—26, to the “ Second Cause,” which, Eusebius says, is described by the Hebrews as the Beginning or Principle of all things, as generated from the First Cause, as the Word, and Wisdom, and Power of God.—(Lib. vii. cap. 12.) The force of this argument, arising from the fragment of Aristobulus, will be felt in a much stronger manner by reading the whole book of the Evangelical Preparation from whence it is extracted.

Philo Judæus is too important a witness to the early opinions of the Jews to be overlooked on the present occasion ; and he will be found, upon examination, to coincide with the testimony before produced. It will be seen, that he not only alludes to and cites the eighth chapter of Proverbs, but that he understood it in a personal sense, and actually applied it to the divine Logos.

In the treatise *De Confusione Linguarum*, (p. 258, A. Colon. 1613,) he observes, *τουτον μεν γαρ πρεσβυτατον υιον ο των οντων ανεθηκε πατηρ, ον ετερωθι πρωτογονον ωνομασε, και ο γεννηθης μεντοι μιμουμενος τας του πατρος οδους, προς παραδειγματα αρχετυπα εκεινον ελεπων, εμορφου εδη.* “ Him the Father of all things that exist produced as his eldest Son, whom he elsewhere names his First-begotten ; and He being generated, in imitation of his Father’s ways, and viewing his archetypal patterns, modelled forms.” By comparing this with

the LXX version of Proverbs, viii. 22, et seq. it will appear very probable, that Philo had an eye to Solomon's description of Wisdom. In various places he speaks of the Logos as a Son, as begotten, as the First-begotten; as, for instance, *De Somniis*, p. 463, F.; *Quod Deus sit immutabilis*, p. 232, G.; *De Confus. Ling.* p. 267, B.; *De Agricultura*, p. 152, B. It is true, that the generation of the Son is declared Ps. ii. 7, lxxxix. 28; Micah, v. 2, but nowhere more forcibly or in more express terms than in the book of Proverbs: it is, therefore, most likely, that Philo gathered his notions respecting the generation of the Logos, at least in part, from the Proverbs, and that he alludes to the eighth chapter in the above passages, and many others that might easily be adduced. Again, in manifest allusion to Prov. viii. 22, 30, (perhaps also ch. iii. 19,) he styles Wisdom that "by which the universe was made," *την σοφίαν δι' ἧς ἀπετελεσθη τὸ παν*, (*Quod Deterius. Potior, &c.* p. 128, C.;) but, in a multitude of passages, he attributes the creation of all things to the Word; which proves, that Philo identified Wisdom with the Logos, thereby establishing its personality.

An important passage occurs in the treatise *De Temulentia*, (p. 190, D. Colon. 1613,) in which he cites a part of the eighth chapter of Proverbs. *Επιστημὴν ἡ συνὼν ὁ Θεὸς, οὐχ ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἐσπῆρε γενεσιν· ἡ δὲ παραδέξαμεν ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ σπερμὰ, τελεσφόροις ὥδεσι τὸν μόνον καὶ ἀγαπητὸν αἰσθητὸν υἱὸν ἀπεκύησε τὸνδε τὸν κόσμον. ἔσεται γοῦν παρὰ τινι τῶν ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ χοροῦ ἡ σοφία περὶ αὐτῆς λεγούσα τὸν τρόπον τούτου, Ὁ Θεὸς ἐκτίσας με πρωτίστην τῶν ἐαυτοῦ ἐργῶν, καὶ πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐθεμελίωσε με.* "God had intercourse with his own Knowledge, and she, having received the seed of God, produced, by a perfect birth, his only and beloved sensible Son, this world; Wisdom is, therefore, introduced by a sacred Personage, speaking concerning herself, after this manner, God created me

the first of his works, and founded me before the world was.” This is a quotation from Prov. viii. 22, 23, though not exactly according to the LXX; but, for its elucidation, it is necessary to observe, that Philo supposes that God formed the visible creation after an intellectual model which he first formed. Ο Θεος, ατε Θεος, οτι μιμημα καλον ουκ αν ποτε γενοιτο καλον διχα παραδειγματος, ουδε τι των αισθητων ανυπαιτιον, ο μη προς αρχετυπον και νοητην ιδεαν απεικονισθη, βουληθεis τον ορατον τουτονι κοσμον εμμουρghσαι, προεξετυπον τον νοητον, ινα χρωμενος ασωματω και θεοειδεστατω παραδειγματι, τον σωματικον απεργασηται, πρεσβυτερον νεωτερον απεικονισμα. “God,” says he, “as being God, foreseeing that a beautiful imitation cannot exist without a beautiful pattern, nor anything sensible (*αισθητος, perceptible by the senses*) be faultless, which does not answer to some archetypal and intelligible idea, and having decreed to form this visible world, first formed the intelligible one, that, according to the incorporeal and Godlike model, he might frame the material world, the recent image of the older one.”—(De Mundi Opificio, p. 3, B. See *ibid.* p. 4, G. and Brucker, *Historia Philosophiæ*, lib. iv. cap. 1.) This incorporeal archetype Philo affirms to be the Logos of God, (De Mundi Opificio, p. 4, D. and p. 24, A.) and he combines both the intellectual pattern, or Logos, and the visible imitation, or the world, in the phrase, “the only and beloved sensible Son, the world;” but that he intended to refer the words of Solomon to the former, is beyond a doubt, for the quotation is only applicable to the Logos. This learned Jew, then, understood the Wisdom in the eighth chapter of Proverbs in a personal sense, as designating the divine and eternal Logos.

It may reasonably be doubted, whether Philo borrowed any of his notions respecting the creation, and a plurality in the Divine Essence, from the Platonic philosophy;

(Kidder's *Demonst. of the Messias*, par. iii. cap. 6, p. 111; Allix, *Judgment, &c.* cap. 23; Jamieson's *Vindication, &c.* lib. i. cap. 2;) but his phraseology in the above-cited passage, and in another place, (*Quod Deus sit immutabilis*, p. 232, G.) where he calls the world "the younger son of God," as contradistinguished from the Logos, whom he calls the elder, resembles the language of Plato, who calls God the "Father of the world," speaking repeatedly in the *Timæus* of the world's being generated by the Deity, and even occasionally styling it *μονογενης*, "the only-begotten."—(*Timæus*, vol. ix. p. 307, B. p. 437, C.; *De Anima Mundi*, vol. x. p. 6. Compare *Tim.* vol. ix. p. 302, B. ed. Bipont. See *Diog. Laert.* lib. iii. p. 229, Genev. 1615; and Brucker, *Hist. Phil.* lib. ii. cap. 8.) This language was not peculiar to Plato; *ἀνδρες παλαιοι τονδε τον κοσμον, ως εκ Θεου γενομενον, παιδα τε αυτου και ηθειον προσεπον*, "the ancients," says Celsus, "styled this world, as if generated from God, his Son."—Origen *contra Celsum*, lib. vi. § 47. See Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* lib. i. c. 8 et seq. Burnet has reviewed the physiology of the ancients in his *Archæologiæ Philosophiæ*.

To return to Philo. If Solomon call Wisdom the beginning, (verse 22,) Philo, in like manner, says, *την μεν γαρ θειαν και ουρανιον σοφιαν πολλοις ωνομασεν ονομασι, και πολυωνυμον ουσαν δεδηλωκε· και γαρ αρχην, και εικονα, και ορασιν Θεου κεκληκε*. "He gave many names to the divine and heavenly Wisdom, and showed that she had many names; for he denominated her the Beginning, the Image, and the Vision of God."—(*Lex. Allegor.* p. 36, F.) The last term is, probably, an allusion to the appearances of the Word mentioned in the Old Testament; for Philo, in numerous instances, asserts that the Logos appeared to the patriarchs.—(See Allix, *Judgment*, cap. 13.) If Solomon say that Wisdom was the efficient cause or creator of all things, (ver. 22, 30,) Philo expressly asserts the same.—(*Quod Det. Potior.*

p. 128, C.) If Solomon say that Wisdom existed before the earth, Philo, in exact correspondency, observes, σοφίαν δε πρεσβύτεραν ου μονον της εμης γενεσεως, αλλα και της του κοσμου παντος ουσαν, "that Wisdom is more ancient, not only than myself, but also than the whole world."—(De Charitate, p. 540, E.) If Solomon speak of the generation of Wisdom, Philo likewise says that Wisdom is spoken of in the feminine, that the dignity and preeminence of paternity might be preserved to God, evidently considering it as a subsisting Being, generated from him.—(De Profugis, p. 357, F.) If Solomon describe Wisdom as God's "daily delight, rejoicing always before him," (ver. 30,) Philo remarks, that Wisdom χαίρει και γαυννται και τρυφα, επι μονω τω πατρι αυτης αγαλλομενη και σεμνυνομενη Θεω, "rejoices, and delights, and exults, rejoicing and glorying in God her only Father."—(Lex. Allegor. p. 39, F.) It is worthy of remark, though irrelevant to my present design, that Philo describes Wisdom as the Rock in the wilderness, (Lex. Allegor. lib. iii. p. 853, A.) and St. Paul affirms that rock was Christ, 1 Cor. x. 4.

From the evidence adduced, then, we may safely infer, that Philo understood the Wisdom delineated in Proverbs in a personal sense, and considered it as descriptive of a divine Hypostasis. That he also understood it as a title of the same Being whom he elsewhere terms the Logos, may be inferred from the preceding observations. This conclusion will be confirmed, when it is remarked, that he ascribes the same attributes and characters to both. Thus he styles the Logos the Image of God, the Creator of the world, Eternal, the Son of God, and the First-begotten of God, (see the proper references in Bryant's Sentiments of Philo Judæus, § iv. vii. xiv. i. iii.) and by these titles and attributes, as we have seen, he characterizes Wisdom. Should any doubt of their identity remain, it will be completely removed by his express

declaration, that the Wisdom of God is the same as the Logos of God, εκ της του Θεου σοφιας· η δε εστιν ο Θεου λογος.—Lex. Allegor. p. 39, G.

Having therefore proved, that Philo both alludes to and cites the eighth chapter of Proverbs, and that he understood it as a portrait of that divine Being whom he elsewhere denominates the Logos, nothing remains to complete the argument, except to prove the personality and divinity of the Logos of Philo. This is established by a weight of evidence, as appears to me, absolutely irresistible; but as the discussion of this question, though one of great interest, is not necessary to my present purpose, I refer the reader, desirous of further satisfaction, to Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, par. 3, cap. 5. et seq.; Allix's Judgment of the Ancient Jewish Church; Whitaker's Origin of Arianism; Bryant's Sentiments of Philo Judæus; Jamieson's Vindication of the Deity of Christ, lib. i.

Jewish testimony of a subsequent period, were it necessary, might easily be produced in confirmation of our position; but it may be thought sufficient to quote the sentiments of an author, than whom few have been better acquainted with Rabbinical writings. "They maintain," says Allix, "the wisdom spoken of by Solomon to be the cause by which all particular beings have been formed, and they call it the second number, which proceeds from the first, as from his spring, and brings from it the influx of all blessings. This is the doctrine of *R. Nechouniah ben Cana*, and of the author of *Rabboth*, which *R. Menachem* quotes at large, *ibid. fol. 1, col. 1.*"—(Judgment, &c. cap. 11.) According to the same learned writer, "They understand the Wisdom which rules the world, as it is said, *Prov. viii.* to be the same which is spoken of *Prov. iii. 19*, and to be the Son of the living God, the same who spoke by *Ezek. xxii. 2.* See *R. Menach.*

in *Pent. fol. 1, col. 2*, from *Bereshit Rabba*, and from *Zohar, ibid. fol. 2, col. 1, and fol. 35, col. 1, and fol. 44, col. 1.*—Judgment, &c. cap. 17.

Since, then, we are warranted, by a critical examination of this chapter, in referring it to the second Person in the ever-blessed Trinity; and since both the ancient Jewish and Christian churches concur in this interpretation, we may appeal to it, without hesitation, in proof of the Divinity and eternal Filiation of the Son;—to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, three Persons and one God, be all honour and glory world without end. Amen.

CHAPTER IX.

1. *Wisdom hath built her house*—In the preceding chapter Solomon introduced the eternal and hypostatic Wisdom addressing mankind, and portraying his attributes and operations. He now enters again upon a description of the same Wisdom, (from verse 1 to verse 12,) and delineates his future acts in strong and lively, though not unambiguous, imagery. In its application to the consubstantial Logos, it may be considered as a prophecy, in which the royal sage, with the eye of prophetic vision, sees the future glory of the Son in the establishment of his church, in the appointment of apostles and ministers, and in the general invitation to accept the offers of evangelic light and life. The description, indeed, runs in the past time; but it is well known, that the Hebrew prophets commonly used the preterite in uttering their predictions, to denote the certainty of the event.—(Gerard's Institutes, No. 889; Macknight, Prelim. Essay, p. 100; Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 304.) The correctness of this interpretation will appear by a critical analysis of each separate verse.

— *Wisdom*—חכמות, plural, by way of dignity and eminence, as in ch. i. 20. See the note there.

— *her house*—The Christian church is denominated a house (*οικος*) 1 Tim. iii. 15; Heb. iii. 6, x. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 5, iv. 17. Compare Ps. xxxvi. 9; Isaiah, lvi. 7. The apostle tells us, that “this man (Jesus Christ) was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, in as much as he who hath builded the house, hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.”—(Heb. iii. 3.) St. Paul says, that “Christians are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for the habitation of God through the Spirit.”—(Eph. ii. 20.) These passages are an excellent comment upon the prophetic words of Solomon, “Wisdom hath built her house;” *i. e.* the divine Logos, personated under the title Wisdom, as appears plain from ch. viii. will erect a glorious church when the time of his first advent approacheth.

— *her seven pillars*—By pillars are meant the apostles and ministers of Christ. Thus Peter, James, and John are called pillars Gal. ii. 9. Compare Rev. iii. 12. In the epistle from the church of Vienne and Lyons to the churches in Asia, their friends and supporters are called pillars; (Routh’s *Reliquiæ Sacræ*, vol. i. p. 268, also p. 273;) and the ancient fathers frequently designate the apostles and ministers of Christ by the same term.—(Clemens Rom. Ep. § 5, and the note in ed. Coteler; Suicer in voc. *στυλος*.) Jeremiah is styled a pillar Jer. i. 18; and a wife is so called Ecclesiasticus, xxxvi. 24. The same metaphorical manner of speaking occurs among profane authors, of which Suicer has produced some examples.

— *seven*—It is absurd to refine, like Grotius, upon the number seven, and to deduce recondite meanings from it, as

it is usual with the sacred writers to employ a definite number for an indefinite. This expression denotes the firmness and stability of the Christian church.—Michælis, Not. Uber.

2. *She hath killed*—From טבח *to slay*, is derived טבח *tabbhâch*, a cook, and טבח *tebhach*, an animal fit to be killed and cooked, answering to σιτιστα, Matt. xxii. 4.—Compare Gen. xliii. 16; 1 Sam. xxv. 11.

— *hath mingled her wine*—The learned Gataker (*Adversaria*, c. 5) contends, that this expression, “mingled her wine,” means “paravit et crateribus infudit,” as the words *μυσγειν οινον* are used by Homer; and illustrates his opinion, as usual, with a profusion of learning. Mr. Harmer thinks that the mingling of wine, so often mentioned in the Old Testament, “means the opening the jars of old, and, consequently, strong wine; which opening makes the wine somewhat turbid, by mixing the lees with it; they, it seems, having no way of drawing it off fine from those earthen vessels in which it is kept, which we may learn from D’Arvieux’s complaint relating to the wine near mount Carmel; and so this *mingled wine* stands in opposition to *new wine*, which is, to the eye, of an uniform colour.”—(*Observations*, vol. ii. p. 143.) But Bishop Lowth, with more propriety, takes the “mixed wine” of the Hebrews for “wine made stronger and more inebriating, by the addition of higher and more powerful ingredients; such as honey, spices, &c.”—(*Note on Isaiah*, i. 22.) I need quote no more from a work in the hands of every scholar; but the whole note is well worth perusal. See also the anonymous note in Merrick’s *Annotations on Ps. lxxv. 9*.

3. *She hath sent, &c.*—This and the preceding verses depict the first promulgation of Christianity, when the glad tidings of salvation were proclaimed throughout the world,

both to the Jews and the Greeks. The general invitation to the Gospel covenant is set forth in Isaiah (ch. lv. 1) as a banquet to be obtained "without money, and without price;" and the same evangelical prophet declares, that the Lord of Hosts will make on mount Zion "unto all people a feast of fat things; a feast of wines on the lees," (ch. xxv. 6,) which can be explained only of the first establishment of Christianity, when all mankind were invited to the heavenly feast. Our blessed Lord compares the kingdom of heaven to a king who made a nuptial feast for his son; and when they that were bidden would not come, he sent his servants into the highways, and "they gathered together all, as many as they found, both bad and good, and the wedding was furnished with guests."—(Matt. xxii. 1, et seq.; Luke, xiv. 16.) Christ's spiritual kingdom is represented in other places under images borrowed from a feast, Matt, viii. 11; Luke, xxii. 29; Rev. xix. 9.

The commentators observe, that there is a peculiar propriety in describing wisdom as surrounded by female attendants, because it was, probably, usual in these early times to invite people to a feast by means of a company of females. "Haselquist observed a custom in Egypt, which he imagines to be very ancient. He saw a number of women, who went about inviting people to a banquet. They were about ten or twelve in number, covered with black veils, as is usual in that country. They were preceded by four eunuchs; after them, and on the side, were Moors with their usual walking-staves. As they were walking, they all joined in making a noise, which, he was told, signified their joy, but which he could not find resembled a pleasing song. This passage of Solomon seems to allude to this practice; for wisdom is said to have *sent forth her maidens*, and to *cry upon the high places of the city*."—Burder's Oriental Customs. See Hammer, vol. ii. p. 17.

— *upon the highest places*—That is, the most conspicuous part of the city; but it may, perhaps, allude, as Calmet thinks, to the tops of houses and parapets, from which it was customary to proclaim aloud what they desired to be publicly known.—(See Matt. x. 27.) פג means *a summit* or *high place*, as seems clear from the context, and the parallel place ch. viii. 2. As it is ἀπαξ λεγ. it may be illustrated from the Arabic, and Schultens appeals to the Arabic جند, to which he attributes the sense of *convexus fuit*, though it is not allowed either by Golius or Castell. Parkhurst derives it from פג to *hit* or *strike*. Perhaps both פג, and פג *a body*, may be referred to פג radix inusit. which, in Chaldee and Rabbinical, means *clausit, cinxit*; hence פג, in Syriac and Chaldee, means *a wing*.—See Simonis, Lex. ed. Eichhorn, in פג.

7. *the wicked his faults*—The words “getteth disgrace” must be supplied from the first line; namely, he who reproves a scorner, and he who points out to a wicked man his (the wicked man’s) faults, getteth nothing but ridicule and disgrace. So Cocceius and Parkhurst.

8. *Reprove not, &c.*—By a scorner is meant an obstinate, wicked person, who scorns admonition and laughs at wholesome counsel.—(Ch. i. 4.) With such a one advice and reproof are alike ineffectual; and he who attempts to admonish him gets nothing but ridicule and contempt. “Speak not in the ears of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of thy words;” (ch. xxiii. 9;) and our Saviour says, “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine;” (Matt. vii. 6;) where, by “that which is holy,” we are to understand the doctrines of the Gospel, and by “dogs and swine,” the wicked who pertinaciously continue in their sins and despise the truth.—(See Grotius, Whitby, and

Vorstius, de Adagiis, cap. iv. p. 779.) “Nulli nisi audituro dicendum est,” says Seneca.—(Ep. 29.) But these expressions are not to be regarded as a dissuasive against reproof from those whose character and office entitle them to give it. There are frequent injunctions in Scripture to use every endeavour, by example, by exhortation, by rebuke, to reform the wicked and impenitent; (1 Thess. v. 14; 2 Thess. iii. 14, 15; 1 Tim. v. 20; 2 Tim. iv. 2;) and in Proverbs Solomon himself gives great praise to manly and well-timed rebuke.—(Ch. x. 17, xii. 1, xiii. 18, xv. 5, 31, 32, xxv. 12, xxvii. 5, xxviii. 23.) The precept, therefore, in this verse, is to be understood as a caution against indiscriminate reproof; for unless it be given prudently and discreetly, it will be useless, and sometimes injurious.

— *a wise man*].—The ל in לַחֲכָם supplies the place of את, indicative of the accusative.—(Noldius, 44; Altingii Fund. Punct. p. 432.) Lomed is used in like manner in Syriac.—Schaaf, Lex. Syriac.

9. *Give reproof, &c.*].—Notwithstanding the observations of Glass (Phil. Sac, p. 221) and others, I am far from being convinced that נתן ever means *to teach*. The expression seems elliptical, and may be supplied from the preceding verses; *i. e.* give the reproof before mentioned to a man who desires wisdom, and he will become wise. “A wise man,” “a righteous man,” are to be understood of men comparatively so. Similar remarks occur ch. xix. 25, xxi. 11, and they may be illustrated by Matt. xiii. 12; xxv. 29.

10. *The fear of Jehovah*].—This is not parallel with ch. i. 7, as the expressions in the original are different. The fear of the Lord, in one point of view, is the beginning or commencement of wisdom, because it is the foundation upon which true wisdom is built; and, in another point of view,

it is the principal part of it, because it is essential to wisdom, which cannot exist without it, and because it is the highest wisdom to reverence and obey the Almighty.—See Gussetii Lex. חלל, O. P.

— *of the Holy One*—Dimock asks, “May the text be understood of the Trinity?” a hint worth all his and Houbigant’s guesses put together. The nature of the aphorism, and the parallelism in which it corresponds with Jehovah in the first line, show that it signifies the Triune God. He is often denominated קדוש, and some have thought that he is called קדוש ch. xxx. 3; Job. v. 1, xv. 15, but this is very uncertain. קדושין, however, appears clearly to be used for God in Dan. iv. 14, Heb.; (see Wintle in loc. and particularly Horsley’s Sermon 29;) and in other Scriptures he is designated by a plural noun; as, Gen. i. 1, 26, iii. 5, 22, xi. 7, xx. 13, xxxv. 7; Deut. iv. 7; Josh. xxiv. 19; Ps. cxlix. 2; Eccles. xii. 1; Isaiah, vi. 8, liv. 5. For my own part, when I reflect that the name of God (אלהים) is of a plural form; that it is joined with plural nouns, adjectives, and verbs; that other appellations are applied to him in the plural number; and yet that one grand object of the Jewish economy was to establish the unity of the Godhead; I cannot but conclude, that something more was intended by these plural terms than dignity and eminence, namely, that they were designed to indicate, though obscurely, a plurality of Persons in the Unity of the Divine Essence.—(See Maurice on the Oriental Trinities.) This opinion, however, is opposed by some eminent scholars, Storr, Observat. &c. p. 98; Doederlein, Institutio Theologi, l. i. c. 1, § 113, &c. A variety of authors on this subject are referred to in Simonis, Lex. voc. אלהים.

12. *If thou be wise*—If thou be wise, and listen to my reproof and instruction, thou wilt do it to thine own

advantage; but if thou scorn them, thou alone shalt bear the punishment of thy folly. From the foregoing examination of this passage, it is obvious, that it may be referred to the eternal Son of God; at the same time, candour demands the acknowledgment, that no personal characters have been discovered which *necessarily* designate him as the subject. There is nothing incongruous, nothing unsuitable to him; yet there is nothing that absolutely determines its application to him, as is the case with the eighth chapter. In my own opinion, the true exposition is given in the note to the first verse; nevertheless, as it will admit an interpretation in reference to wisdom or religion, it must be regarded as an equivocal passage, and cannot, therefore, be adduced in proof of the Divinity of our blessed Lord.

They who cannot discover in this delineation any intimation of a celestial being, consider it as a beautiful and poetical picture of wisdom or religion, which is represented as a queen sitting in a royal palace, magnificently furnished, and inviting mankind to repair to the splendid banquet prepared for her votaries. She presents a rich intellectual feast, and invites the erring children of mortality to partake of it, promising life and happiness to those who accept the offer, but threatening pain and misery to those who refuse the invitation.

— *bear the punishment*—אָנען, elliptically for עין or אָנען אָנען, which signify *to be punished, to bear punishment*, Lev. v. 1, 17, xix. 17, xxiv. 15; Numb. xviii. 22, 32; Ps. lxxxviii. 15; Ezek. xiv. 10. With great pleasure I refer to Magee on the Atonement, vol. i. p. 436; see also Waltheri Ellipsæ Heb. p. 81, ed. Schulz.

13. *A foolish woman*—Some commentators take this passage for folly personified, as being opposed to the preceding representation of wisdom; and, like wisdom, she hath her house where she sits, and invites the passer by to partake of

her banquet; (Schultens, Le Clerc, Dathe, Poli Synop. ;) but Solomon expressly denominates the subject of his discourse "a foolish woman," an expression not very compatible with a personification of folly; and all the actions attributed to her agree with the character of a wanton. It is, therefore, to be understood as a picture of a harlot, like those in ch. ii. 16, v. 3, 20, vi. 24, vii. 5; and no wonder that the royal author, after contemplating the excellencies of wisdom, and the infinite perfections of the Being represented by that term, should turn to the consideration of that which is the greatest obstacle to wisdom, and which is most likely to delude unsuspecting youth, namely, the allurements of licentious beauty.

— *She is simple*]*פתיית*, feminine plural, *i. e.* the harlot is simplicity itself, and the plural is used to denote that she is so in a superlative degree. See ch. i. 4, note. *מה* *aliquid, quidquam*, as ch. xxv. 8.—(Noldius, 2.) *ידע*; see ch. v. 6, and note.

14. *On a lofty seat*]*—*See some curious observations upon high raised seats in Harmer, vol. ii. p. 500, et seq.

— *in the high places of the city*]*—*That is, her house was there, in the most elevated and most frequented part of the city.

16. *Whoso is simple*]*—*These words Solomon had before ascribed to wisdom, (verse 4,) but are very properly put into the mouth of "the foolish woman;" for as wisdom invites the simple to come unto her, and receive the excellent viands she provides; so the harlot invites the simple to her entertainment, which, however sweet for the present, contains a deadly poison. It is ironical, namely, Come, ye who are called simple by these wise people, come, and solace yourselves with delights.—Ch. vii. 18.

17. *And the bread of concealment*—This phrase corresponds with “stolen waters” in the first line, and, consequently, signifies bread “procured by clandestine and indirect means,” as Durell expresses it; an adage expressive of illicit pleasures; as ch. xx. 17, where see the note.

“Nitimur in vetitum semper, cupimusque negata;
Sic interdictis imminet æger aquis.”

Ovid, *Eleg. lib. iii. 4, l. 17.*

18. *But he knoweth not, &c.*—This is the reflection of Solomon, bold, animated, energetic. The deleterious effects of harlot wiles are strongly and happily expressed ch. vii. 26, 27, but still with less force and brilliancy. Here the guests of the courtesan are described, by a bold figure, as already dead, and already in the depths of Hades; yet the deluded passenger does not regard it, but accepts her treacherous invitation to his inevitable ruin.

CHAPTER X.

1. *The Proverbs of Solomon*—Here commences the second part of the book. The former chapters are more in the form of a continued discourse, in which the nature and excellence of religious wisdom are depicted in the most lively and beautiful colours, and in which mankind are exhorted to shun the fascinations of vice. But the remainder of the book contains the dictates of wisdom, expressed in short, terse, antithetic sentences, for the most part unconnected, yet forming a code of moral aphorisms unrivalled for depth of thought, acuteness of observation, piety of sentiment, and poignancy of expression. Bishop Hall has endeavoured to digest and methodize these Proverbs under the heads of ethics, politics, and economics; (*Works*, vol. i. p. 181;) but the arrangement is often fanciful, and affords little or no advantage to the

reader. The learned Drusius, also, has arranged the Proverbs in an alphabetical series according to their subjects, and added some very useful explanations, in a tract, printed in the third volume of the *Critici Sacri*.

Durell thinks that the clause, "The Proverbs of Solomon," is a Masoretical gloss, and the Targum is the only one of the ancient versions that expresses it; but it is not unlikely that, after the general exhortations are ended, the title should be repeated, especially as the following part may, with more propriety, be called Proverbs. "*Hæc jam vere Proverbia vel Sententiosa lumina et acumina; quibus nihil concisius uberiusque simul concipi potest, ut corpus constituunt hujus collectionis, ita novo titulo inscribi distinguique merebantur.*" —Schultens.

— *A wise son, &c.*]—In the writings of Solomon, wisdom and folly have reference to moral conduct; a wise son, therefore, is one who strives to become virtuous and pious; a foolish son, the contrary. The sentiment in this verse is often repeated; ch. xv. 20, xvii. 21, 25, xix. 13, xxvii. 11, xxix. 3, 15.

2. *Treasures of wickedness*]—That is, treasures obtained by wicked means. See ch. xx. 17, xxxi. 27. Compare Micah, vi. 10.

— *But righteousness*]—Many understand צדק in the sense of *alms, beneficence, or liberality*; (Mede, Disc. 22, p. 81; Geier, Doederl. Dathe, &c.;) but it is more correct to say, that righteousness, in its most general sense, delivereth from death, *i. e.* from evil, and causes a long and prosperous life.—(Ch. iv. 4, note.) Or, if it ought at all to be restricted, the parallelism would incline one to interpret it of righteousness in the acquirement of wealth. Compare ch. xi. 4.

3. *Jehovah will not, &c.*—There can be no better comment on this verse than the 37th Psalm. “I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread. For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever, but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.”—(Verse 25 et seq.) The promises of long life and prosperity, so frequently made in the Proverbs and other parts of the Old Testament, to obedience, had especial reference to the Mosaic dispensation, which was built upon temporal sanctions. See Prelim. Diss. and ver. 30.

— *the iniquity*—The ancient versions differ in rendering הוה, in regimen הוה, but that it means both *iniquity* and *calamity* is fully established by biblical usage.—(See the Lex.) It is, therefore, unnecessary to call in the aid of the Arabic *هوى concupivit*, and to render it “*cupiditatem*,” with Schul-tens, Doederlein, Dathe, and Dindorf.

4. *He becometh poor*—The Hebrew may be rendered, “The slothful (or, remiss) hand maketh poor.” So Vulgate, Le Clerc, Durell, Hodgson, and some in Poli Synop. Parkhurst contends, that רמיה never means *slack, remiss*, but *deceit* or *fraud*, which it often undoubtedly does. It must, however, signify *remiss, slothful*, ch. xii. 24, 27, where, as well as in this verse, it is opposed to diligence; and in ch. xix. 15, it corresponds with עזלה, *idleness*. The Aleph in ראש is epenthetic.

5. *He that gathereth, &c.*—The Hebrew may be rendered,
“A wise son gathereth in summer;

A shame-causing (or, shameful) son sleepeth in harvest.”

The sense is, a wise man will omit no opportunity of doing good; and will gladly employ the summer of life in making a suitable provision for age.

— *that causeth shame*—בן מביש occurs in ch. xvii. 2, xix. 26, נער מביש ch. xxix. 15, and denotes a base and degenerate person, of whom his parents are ashamed.

6. *But violence covereth the mouth of the wicked*—This version is approved by Tigur. J. Trem. Piscat. Geier, Schult. Din. Dathe, and means, that violence prevents the wicked from blessing and praising the just man, and from uttering that which is right and good. But it may be rendered, “the mouth of the wicked concealeth violence,” *i. e.* benedictions are bestowed upon the righteous; but the wicked endeavour by their language to conceal the maliciousness of their hearts. So verse 11. The antithesis is not always exact.

7. *shall rot*—*i. e.* shall become as detestable as putrid substances.

8. *shall fall*—לִבַּט only occurs here, verse 10, and Hos. iv. 14; consequently, recourse may be had to the kindred languages. Now لَبَط, in Arabic, signifies, according to Golius, *concidit cum erectus staret, et prostratus fuit*, and this sense is applicable to the three above-cited passages. The versions vary exceedingly; but, for full information, I refer to Schultens in loc.; Michaelis, Suppl. No. 1263; and Pococke on Hosea, iv. 14.

— *But a prating fool*—*i. e.* “qui non nisi stulta loquitur, et ne verbo quidem stultitiam suam celare potest.”—Vatablus.

9. *He that walketh, &c.*—“To walk,” in Scripture, frequently signifies *to behave*; and “way or path” denotes *the conduct* or manner of life.—(Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 1188, ed. Dathe.) The sense then is, He that conducts himself with integrity acts safely, but he that is perverse in his course of life shall be stigmatized.

— *shall be known*].—That is, shall become notorious, shall be made a public example, *παράδειγμα τῆς ὁδοῦ*. Or ידע may mean “shall be detected,” Hodgson, Durell; “innotescet,” Schultens, Le Clerc, and some in Poli Synop. To be detected in criminality is a species of punishment, owing to the shame and confusion it occasions: hence Dathe renders it “*poenas dabit*,” and Schultens (*Animadvers. inter Opera Minora*, p. 48) contends that ידע sometimes means *poenas luet*, and appeal has been made to Judges, viii. 16; Job, xxi. 19 (where see Schultens;) Ps. xiv. 4; Isaiah, ix. 8; Jer. xxxi. 19; Hosea, ix. 7; but these texts do not unquestionably prove it. To establish the meaning of a word, it is not enough to show that it *may* be applied to a particular text in the sense contended for; it must be shown to be *probable*, at least, that it is so applied. In appealing to scriptural usage, bare possibility is not sufficient; but the evidence may vary through all the intermediate degrees from probability to absolute certainty.

10. *He that winketh, &c.*].—See ch. vi. 13, and note; also verse 8.

11. *The mouth, &c.*].—Words of benevolence and wisdom proceed out of the mouth of the righteous, as refreshing and limpid streams from the pure fountain; but violence prevents the wicked from uttering anything salutary and pleasant.

— *a fountain of life*].—This expression occurs ch. xiii. 14, xiv. 27, xvi. 22.

12. *But love covereth, &c.*].—כסה, spoken of sins, sometimes means *to pardon them*, Nehem. iv. 5; Ps. xxxii. 1, lxxxv. 3; sometimes *to veil, conceal, or extenuate them*, ch. xii. 16, 23; xvii. 9, xxviii. 13; Job, xxxi. 33; Ps. xxxii. 5: but as love can in no respect be said to pardon sin, it must

mean, love veils or palliates all sins; does not like to dwell upon them and exaggerate them, as envious and malicious people do. St. James says, (Ep. v. 20,) "he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins;" that is, he shall cause the sins of the converted person to be forgiven; he shall be the instrument of the sinner's forgiveness.—(See Wolfii Curæ, Rosenmuller, and Macknight.) St. Peter likewise says, that "charity shall cover a multitude of sins," (1 Ep. iv. 8,) namely, love, *ἡ ἀγάπη*, covers the sins of others, "preventing them by patience, not taking notice of them when committed, and concealing them from others," as Whitby paraphrases the apostolic language. But see Schleusneri Lex. *καλυπτω*. *רָפָה*; see Schroeder, Obser. ad Orig. Heb. c. 2, § 16, p. 26.

13. *But a rod, &c.*—The common corporeal punishment of the Mosaic Law was stripes.—(Lev. xix. 20; Deut. xxii. 18, xxv. 2. See Michælis, Comment. Art. 239.) Dathe's version gives the sense, "*Verberibus castigandus est stultus.*"

14. *But destruction is near, &c.*—Let Solomon be his own interpreter: "A fool's mouth," says he, "is his destruction; and his lips are the snare of his soul."—Ch. xviii. 7. See ch. xii. 13, xxi. 23; Eccles. x. 12. See Bauer, *Critica Sacra*, vol. ii. p. 275.

15. *The rich man's wealth, &c.*—From the parallel place, ch. xviii. 11, it may be inferred, that this aphorism describes the effects of wealth upon the possessor. He places his confidence in it, as the inhabitants confide in a city defended with walls and bulwarks. But poverty is "the destruction of the poor;" it too often proves an effectual bar against the exertion of their talents and their virtues:

"Haud facile emergunt quorum virtutibus obstat
Res angusta domi—"

As it is imitated by Dr. Johnson, with inimitable force and beauty :

“ This mournful truth is every where confess’d,
Slow rises worth by poverty depress’d.”

And in some lamentable instances, though, it is to be hoped, they are but few, the poor have been suffered to perish through want. This aphorism is not to be regarded as an universal truth, but, like some others in the book of Proverbs, as an observation respecting what *frequently* happens in human life. Wealth is sometimes possessed along with genuine humility and firm trust in God, unmingled with arrogance or pride; and merit, though surrounded with the rags of indigence, sometimes forces itself to eminence and fame. It must be understood with this limitation, or it would contradict other passages, in which it is declared, that “ he that trusteth in his riches shall fall ;” (ch. xi. 28;) that “ riches profit not in the day of wrath ;” (ch. xi. 4;) that “ better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.”—Ch. xix. 1, xxviii. 6. Compare ch. xviii. 11, and note.

— *But the destruction*—As חתה means *to be dismayed, terrified*, as well as *destruction*, this hemistich may be rendered, “ The poverty of the poor is their dread.” So Vulgate and one of the Hexaplar versions.

16. *But the produce*—The profits or gains arising from the schemes and labours of the wicked.

— *to destruction*—The primary sense of חטא is *aberrare a scopo*.—(See ch. viii. 36.) The gains of the wicked tend, לחטא, to aberration from their object, *i. e.* they will deviate from or miss life and happiness, and their career will terminate in destruction. The antithesis requires this exposition.

17. *He is in the way, &c.*—The expression is elliptical, and may be supplied by ל before שומר, *i. e.* the way of life

belongs to him who keeps, &c.; or by דורך, *i. e.* he walketh in the way of life who; &c. Durell's version is, "The way of life keepeth instruction; but that which rejecteth reproof causeth to err;" and it is partly supported by the LXX, Syriac, Targ.: nevertheless, the authorized version, which I have followed, seems correct, and yields a good sense.

18. *hath lying lips*—E. T. and others render it, "with lying lips," that is, both he that concealeth hatred, and he that uttereth slander, are alike fools: but, I think, the meaning of the first hemistich is, "He that concealeth hatred hath lying lips;" he must dissemble: he "hath the lips of hypocrisy," Hodgson. The LXX, Syriac, and Vulg., by a violation of grammar, make "lips" the nominative to the verb.

19. *In the multitude, &c.*—As a multitude of words is not necessarily sinful, the observation must be restricted to that πολυλογία, *much speaking*, which proceeds from levity and folly. Such loquacity is seldom harmless; it leads to detraction, to falsehood, to the encouragement of impure and profane ideas. No useful speech is here condemned, nor that flow of decent language which takes place in the hilarity of social intercourse; but that only which our Saviour stigmatizes under the terms παν ρημα αργον, (Matt. xii. 36,) "every pernicious word," as Campbell very properly renders it, and of which an account must be given in the day of judgment.—Compare Ephes. iv. 29.

21. *instruct many*—ירעו, literally, "feed many;" in a spiritual sense, teach or instruct; "erudiunt," Vulg. The lips of the righteous supply many with spiritual food, with intellectual nourishment. Teaching is often expressed in Scripture by the term feeding; Jer. iii. 15, xxiii. 4; Ezek. xxxiv. 8, 14, 23; John, xxi. 15; Acts, xx. 28; Ephes. iv. 11; 1 Pet. v. 2, 3.

22. *The blessing, &c.*—The blessing of God maketh rich, in the best sense of the word, rich in comfort and in the possession of spiritual delights. The blessing of Jehovah is the nominative absolute.—Robertson's Gram. p. 311; Schroeder, Reg. 33; Glass, p. 67.

23. *So is*—Vau is here a particle of comparison.—Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 603; Noldius, 61.

25. *When the tempest beats, &c.*—When the day of calamity arrives, and the storm of God's wrath rages abroad, the wicked soon come to an end. This is beautifully described in Job, xx. 4, et seq. Calamity is represented under the image of a tempest, Job, ix. 17; Ps. l. 3, lxxxiii. 16, Heb.; Isaiah, liv. 11; Jer. xxiii. 19, xxv. 32, xxx. 23; Ezek. xiii. 11, &c.; and our Saviour employs the same imagery Matt. vii. 24, et seq. But the righteous have an everlasting foundation; their hope, faith, and confidence are built upon the Rock of ages, and they remain unmoved amid the storms and tempests by which the vicious are overwhelmed.

“ As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.”

26. *As vinegar, &c.*—As acid substances often affect the teeth in a disagreeable manner, and as smoke is noxious to the eyes; so is an idle, loitering messenger vexatious to those that send him.—See Bochart, Hieroz. par. 1, lib. ii. cap. 7.

28. *The hope of the righteous, &c.*—This proverb may be true in the most general sense; but it seems to refer more particularly to long life and happiness, which are wished for equally by the virtuous and wicked. The hopes which the former entertain of possessing them are pleasant and

consolatory, but the expectations of the latter end in disappointment and regret. The hope and desire of the wicked is often said to perish, ch. xi. 7; Job, viii. 13, xi. 20, xviii. 14; Ps. cxii. 10; that is, instead of gaining the object of their hopes, they meet with disappointment.

29. *The way of Jehovah, &c.*—The way of Jehovah may be taken in an active sense, for the operation or working of Jehovah; *i. e.* God, in his wise operations or proceedings, gives strength to and establishes the upright, and destroys the wicked: or in a passive sense, for the way which Jehovah appoints, namely, religion, or the law of God, which confers great blessings to them that embrace it, but destruction to them that wilfully reject it. I prefer the former explication, as the same expression denotes the working or operation of God ch. viii. 22; but, as the text is not quite free from ambiguity, I have not ventured to alter the received version.—See Poli Synop.

31. *The mouth of the righteous, &c.*—“*Allegoria sumitur a vite vel arbore, cujus sicut propagines latæ efflorescunt, ita loquelæ quasi fructus, dicta sapientia, succum habent et vigorem: at pravorum lingua excinditur, ut solet in arbore sterili et noxia, vel vite quam ars agricolarum ferro amputans coercet, ne silvescat sarmentis et in omnes partes nimia fundatur, ut ait Cicero Cat. maj. 15.*”—Doederleinii Scholia.

32. *love what is acceptable*—יָרַע *to love, to regard*.—(See ch. v. 6, note.) רָצוֹן *acceptableness*, put for that which is agreeable and acceptable: “*ea norunt loqui, quæ suavia sint audita et gratiam ipsi concilient.*”—Michaelis, Not. Uber. Compare ch. xv. 26, xvi. 13; Ps. xix. 15; Col. iv. 6.

CHAPTER XI.

1. *A false balance*—See the note ch. xvi. 11.

2. *When pride cometh, &c.*—Shame is an attendant upon pride; “*superbiam sequitur ignominia*,” Dathe.

— *But with the humble*—ענוים is compared by Michaelis (Suppl. No. 2175) with the Arabic صنع *fecit*, peculialiter *de accurato studio, elaborando in re aliqua*, and rendered “*apud cautos est sapientia*.” Schulz refers it to the Syriac ܐܠܥܝܐ *astute egit*, and renders it, “*cum astutis est prudentia*.” With as much reason we might render it, “*with the adorned is wisdom*,” because صنع, in conj. 5, means *ornavit semet*; or “*with the strong*,” because in Æthiopic it means *invaluit, fortis fuit*.—(See Castell.) How trifling are such derivations! That ענוים denotes *the humble*, is proved, 1. By the parallelism, being opposed to ורין *pride*. 2. In Chaldee it means *humble, modest*. 3. The LXX render it by ταπεινων; the Syriac by ܠܦܬܝܢܐ “*the meek*” or “*humble*”; the Vulgate gives the same sense; Theodotion by επιεικων; but Symmachus by επιμελεσι, “*with the diligent*.” 4. This sense is well suited to Micah, vi. 8, the only other place where it occurs, and where it is used adverbially: “*What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*” *i. e.* be not high-minded, but humble thyself, and be ready to obey the commandments of God.—(See the Targum on the place.) The traditionary sense, therefore, ought to be adopted.

3. *But the perverseness*—The root סלף occurs nine times; and ch. xix. 3; Exod. xxiii. 8; Deut. xvi. 19, indisputably prove, that it means *to pervert, to turn aside from the right course, avertere a recto*. As a noun, it is in this verse opposed

to חמח *integrity*, and must, therefore, mean *maliciousness*, *perverseness*, a sense which suits ch. xv. 4, extremely well. It is sometimes used, not in a moral sense, but *to turn aside*, *to subvert*, *to overthrow*, ch. xiii. 6, xxi. 12, xxii. 12. These are all the passages where it occurs. When the meaning is so clearly established by biblical usage, it is unnecessary to have recourse to the sister dialects for illustration, particularly to refer it to the Arabic سلف, a word that has many significations.—(Schultens on Prov. xiii. 6, xix. 3.) It may, however, be observed, that the above explanation is confirmed by the ancient versions, (Michælis, Suppl. No. 1754,) and by the Chaldee.—Buxtorf, Lex. Talm. et Rab.

4. *the day of wrath*—*i. e.* of God's wrath; riches are useless in the day of God's visitation.—Compare ch. x. 2, and note.

5. *shall direct his way*—ישר *to direct, to make straight*, is often spoken of ways, ארח or דרך; and the meaning of the metaphor is, to direct the behaviour, to regulate the conduct.

7. *when a wicked man dieth, &c.*—At death, all the hopes of the wicked, all the high expectations which the unjust had formed, are found to be vain and fallacious.

— *the unjust*—און has several significations; as, *strength*, *grief*, or *sorrow*, *labour*, *iniquity*; but I have followed the LXX, Syriac, Targum, and Arabic, in rendering אונים “the unjust or wicked,” thinking it best, in a dubious case, to yield to their authority. Schultens renders it adverbially, “*dolentissime disperit*,” and observes, “Connecto אונים אברה *doloribus periit, pro dolorificis modis; ex elegantiore Hebraismo quo plurale substantivum ita resolvi solet.*” He is followed by Parkhurst. Bishop Horsley, in his note on Hos. ix. 4, where he has some acute remarks on the signification of און, thus renders this verse: “When a wicked

man dieth his expectation shall perish, and the hope of the active perisheth."

8. *The righteous, &c.*—Retributive justice sometimes takes place even in this world; and the wicked often perish through the devices which they have imagined against the righteous. "His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate."—(Ps. vii. 16. See Prov. xxvi. 27; Eccles. x. 8.) Should this retribution not be apparent to us, who see only the outward condition and circumstances of men, yet we may assert it as an universal truth, that the traitor is ever more wretched than the betrayed. But retributive justice was more visible under the Mosaic Law than at present.

9. *With his mouth, &c.*—The hypocrite not only injures his neighbour by slander and falsehood, but often beguiles him to destruction by the artful inveiglements of masked villany.

— *the hypocrite*—Michælis, Taylor, Parkhurst, Gataker, (*Adversaria*, cap. 22, p. 249,) and others, contend, that חנף does not mean *a hypocrite*, but a profane person. Hypocrisy and profaneness are nearly allied, and the observation in this verse is true of both. "A hypocrite," says our great lexicographer, "is a dissembler in morality or religion;" such a one is also a profane person. Do not the above-mentioned writers, therefore, attempt to establish a distinction without a difference?

10. *it exults*—רנה, literally, "there is exultation," namely, in the city; but the antithesis is best preserved as in the version.

11. *By the blessing*—This may either mean the blessing which God bestows upon the upright; or their prayers and

benedictions, their supplications to the Almighty to grant a blessing to the city. These preserve the city: but “by the mouth of the wicked,” by their treachery, falsehood, blasphemy, and pernicious counsels, it is overthrown. An allusion, perhaps, to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

12. *He that is, &c.*]—How often does it happen that a fool is exalted in his own conceit, and, in the plenitude of his proud ignorance, looks down upon others with contempt!

— *keepeth silence*]—This is not to be understood absolutely; for there are proper opportunities when a man of understanding will stigmatize the faults of others, and will consider it right, by ridicule, censure, contempt, or any other means, to repress folly and condemn vice; but it means that prudent caution in the exercise of speech which becomes a virtuous character.—Compare ch. x. 19.

13. *A talebearer*]—Dr. Blaney, on Jer. vi. 28, thinks that the words רכיל הולך mean “what we understand by the word *sharpers*, persons that go about practising imposition wherever they can make advantage of it:” but in this verse, and in ch. xx. 19, it evidently denotes some abuse of speech, because it is joined with the revealing of secrets; and the antithesis in this verse shows, that it means *a tattler, a talebearer*. Such likewise is its meaning in Chaldee. As רוכל denotes *a merchant, a trader*, רכיל means “*one who traffics in tales, a trader in slander*,” as Parkhurst expresses it.

15. *is sure*]—“*Securus erit*, scil. a periculo fractionis, quod imprudentibus imminet sponsoribus.”—Michælis, Not. Uber. See ch. vi. 1, note.

16. *A benevolent woman, &c.*]—חן signifies *gracefulness, beauty*, and also *favour, kindness, benevolence*; חמך, *to lay hold on and to retain*, i. e. *to obtain and preserve*. ו is often

a particle of comparison, *sic, ita*. Thus the version is grammatically extracted; and Schultens well expresses the sense: “Mulier, quantumvis tenera sit ac debilis, si gratia ac virtute præstet, admirationem omnium ad se rapiet; tam valide, tam potenter; ut in hac parte contendere possit cum violentis virorum, qui aliorum opes rapiunt invaduntque.” So Michaelis, Not. Uber.—See Poli Synop.

17. *The merciful man, &c.*—Nothing need be added to illustrate this sentiment; it is sufficiently recommended by its native beauty. Though it is, in the main, supported by the ancient versions, Dathe translates it differently:

“Qui sui curam non negligit, erga alios quoque est benignus, Et qui nimia in se ipsum severitate utitur, *in alios quoque* est crudelis.”

So Michaelis, Not. Uber. and Cocceius, ed. Schulz, in גמל and עכר. Namely, He who takes due care of himself, by using proper food and raiment, and cheerfully enjoying the wealth with which Providence has blessed him, is generally merciful and kind to others; but he who macerates his body, either through avarice or mistaken zeal, is commonly cruel to other people.—See R. Levi Ben Gersom.

18. *The wicked toil, &c.*—The riches for which the wicked labour are fallacious, unstable, perishable; for wealth got by iniquity doth not profit; (verse 4, ch. x. 2; Jer. xvii. 11;) but he who exercises righteousness meets with a sure reward.

— *recompense*—פעלת corresponds with שכר in the second line, and therefore means *recompense*, as Lev. xix. 13; Ps. cix. 20; Isaiah, xl. 10, xlix. 4, lxii. 11.—Simonis, Lex. Heb.

— *But he that soweth*—ורע is often used, in a moral sense, for the labour and attention bestowed upon anything, for earnestly engaging in any matter, Job, iv. 8; Ps. cxxvi. 5; Hos. viii. 7, x. 12. So σπειρω is used Gal. vi. 7, 8.

19. *Certainly, &c.*—כֶּן may be a substantive, denoting *firmness, rectitudo*, and then the sense would be “*rectum justitiæ*,” a periphrasis for righteousness. So Cocceius, Schultens, Dathe, and others.

21. *Though hand join in hand*—The expression יד ליד is variously rendered, both by ancient and modern interpreters. The Vulgate is scarcely sense; the Syriac and Targum are to this effect, “He who stretches out his hand against his friend (or neighbour) shall not be guiltless.” Schultens (*Animadvers. inter Opera Minora*, p. 214, and *Comment. in loc.*) interprets it by “*per postereros*.” The parallelism, in some degree, supports it; and it is approved by Dathe, and Schulz, in his edition of *Cocceii Lex.*; the former of whom renders the clause, “*Hæredes impii non erunt impuniti*,” a harsh sentiment; perhaps not reconcilable with the Law of Moses; for the threat of visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children extended only to the sin of idolatry; (Maimonides, *More Nevochim*, par. 1, c. liv. p. 90; Graves, *Lect. on the Pent.* par. 3, *Lect. iii.* § 2;) and certainly it is a translation unsupported by the Hebraic usage. The same interpretation, however, was given before by Mercer, *De Dieu, &c.* (*Poli Syn.*) and Durell would alter the text into יליר *posterity*, but without authority. Others think the expression denotes confederacy; *i. e.* though the wicked combine to resist, they shall not be unpunished.—(*Poli Synop.*) Michælis (*Suppl. No. 956*) says, “*Certi nihil habens, conjicio, ליד יד esse, manu in manum insertâ tibi promitto*.” To join hand was anciently, and still continues in the East, a solemn method of promising, and making an engagement.—(*Parkhurst*, ידד, 5; *Burder's Orient. Customs.*) The LXX seem to have understood the expression of promising, *Χειρ χηρας εμβάλων ἀδικως ουκ ατιμωρητος εστι*, the sense of which I take to be, “He who joins *his* hand to that of *another* falsely,” namely, who

promises, in order to deceive and injure, “shall not be unpunished.” The explication of C. B. Michaelis appears as probable as any: “*Manum manui licet jungat, h. e. ambas manus obvertat, imo manibus pedibusque obnixè omnia faciat, ut averruncet poenam, tamen non impunis erit malus.*” —(Notæ Uberiores.) “The wicked, though uniting all his efforts, and strengthening himself by every possible means, shall find all his earthly hopes and reliances vain. He shall certainly meet with condign punishment; while the arm of the righteous, strengthened by the invincible protection of God, shall deliver him from every danger.”—(Dodd’s Bible.) And this interpretation suits ch. xvi. 5, the only other place where the expression occurs. So Geier and Waltherus, Ellips. Heb. p. 124.

22. *As a jewel of gold, &c.*—I am unwilling to alter the terse and energetic language of our standard version; but the Hebrew might be more literally rendered, “A golden ring in a swine’s snout, is a beautiful woman that turns from discretion.” A fine woman wanting discretion is a degradation to her sex; and all her charms are thrown away, as ornaments are upon grovelling and filthy animals. There is an evident allusion to the custom of wearing nose-jewels, or rings set with jewels hanging from the nostrils; of which an entertaining account is given by Lowth, on Isaiah, iii. 21; Harmer, Obs. vol. iv. p. 316; Burder, Orient. Cust.; Parkh. 101. See also Schroeder, de Vest. Mul. c. 13.

23. *The desire, &c.*—The righteous desire only that which is good, in consequence of which they obtain the blessing of God: but the expectations formed by the wicked, instead of being crowned with success, terminate in punishment. Aben Ezra explains נָא by *generally, for the most part, fere*: but this limitation is unnecessary.

— *wrath*—That is, the anger of God.—(See Geier.) It is unnecessary to read עברה *gnobhrah*, instead of עברה *gnebhrah*, according to the Masoretic copies, i. e. as Dathe renders it, “*Spes impiorum omnem modum excedit*,” for, as a noun, the sense is perspicuous and good.

24. *There is that scattereth*—שׁ may be a noun, signifying *substance*, “*substantiam dissipans*,” as it is rendered by Schultens, whose exposition is excellent: “*Qui liberalitate effusissima sua omnia dispergit in pauperes, occulta Dei benedictione opes sibi accrescere et accumulari sæpe experitur*.” “He who disperses his wealth among the poor by extensive charities, shall often find, that, by the secret blessing of God, his treasures shall increase and accumulate.” Lowth thus renders the second hemistich: “*And (there is) that is unreasonably sparing, yet groweth poor*.”—Prel. Diss. to Isaiah, p. xxiv.

25. *The liberal soul*—Literally, “the soul of blessing,” that is, the kind, charitable, benevolent person, described in the preceding verse. The liberal man (“he who scattereth”) shall be made fat, enriched with plenty and abundance; and he who pours forth his riches upon the poor, like showers upon the dry and parched plains, shall himself be watered with the dews of the divine blessing.—Compare 2 Cor. ix. 6, and see ch. xiii. 4.

— *and he that watereth*—מרוה, from ירה *rigavit*; but it may be derived from רוה *satiatus est*, i. e. “he that satisfieth others:” and from the same root יורא may be deduced, the final א being put for ה, and many MSS. have יורה: but Parkhurst derives it from ירא *to fear, to reverence*; “He that watereth or satisfieth (others) shall be himself respected.”

26. *He that withholdeth, &c.*—He that hoardeth up corn in a time of scarcity, on purpose to raise the price of it, will

receive the maledictions and imprecations of the people.—(See Patrick and Gill.) “Hoc constat, in caritate annonæ, eos, qui nolunt vendere frumentum congestum, quod fit a divitibus avaris, maledictis a populo incessi.”—Le Clerc.

27. *seeketh favour*—Namely, the favour of God. So the ancient versions. בקש *to seek*, not to procure, as rendered in E. T.

28. *like a branch*—The righteous are compared to the germinant branches and exuberant foliage of trees Ps. i. 3, xcii. 12; Jer. xvii. 8; Hosea, xiv. 5.

29. *He that troubleth*—עכר certainly means *to trouble, to cause pain or distress*, ver. 17; 1 Sam. xiv. 29; 1 Kings, xviii. 17, 18; Joshua, vi. 18; Judges, xi. 35; 1 Chron. ii. 7; Ps. xxxix. 2; but it is likewise used in reference to the trouble and mischief occasioned by theft and unjust gain Gen. xxxiv. 30; Joshua, vii. 25; Prov. xv. 6, 27. “He that troubleth his house” may therefore mean, he who accumulates wealth by any means, just or unjust. So Schult. Dathe, Doederl. Cocc. ed. Schulz, Michæl. The Syriac translator, who is unusually paraphrastic, understood it in this manner, כִּנְּן בֵּיתוֹ בִּזְיוֹן, *i. e.* “who buildeth his house by fraud.” But it may mean, he who causes pain and distress to his family by irritability, quarrels, dissipation, &c.—In both cases, it is true that he “shall inherit the wind,” shall, in the end, find nothing but vanity and disappointment.—Compare Eccles. v. 16; Isaiah, xxvi. 18, xli. 29; Hosea, viii. 7. The second line is a general and independent proposition.

30. *And he that winneth*—This line may be rendered, “The wise man winneth souls;” so Dimock, Le Clerc, and many in Poli Synop.; that is, he induces them, by his

agreeable, insinuating discourse, to turn from folly, and to embrace wisdom.—“Tree of life;” see ch. iii. 18.

31. *Behold, the righteous, &c.*—Our authorized version is, “Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner.” This must be erroneous; “for the assertion,” as Durell observes, “that God punishes more the wicked than he rewards the good, is not consonant with our ideas of the Supreme Being, nor founded in fact, either under the Theocracy, or in the more general administration of Providence.” This remark seems correct.

It is generally thought, that this verse is quoted 1 Pet. iv. 18, “if the righteous be scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?” which is literally according to the LXX; but it is more likely, that St. Peter did not intend any citation from Proverbs, as it is not introduced with the usual formulary, “as the Scripture saith,” “as it is written,” &c.; and such only, Dr. Owen thinks, can properly be deemed quotations.—(Modes of Quotation, &c. Preface. See also Surenhusius, Βεβλος Καταλλγης. Præfat.) The apostles were so habituated to the phraseology of the Old Testament, that they naturally adopted the same expressions and phrases, even when no direct application was intended.

But, whether this be true or not, the LXX, though they recede considerably from the letter, may, perhaps, give the true sense. $\alpha\lambda\omega$, in Pih. is *to repay, to recompense*; either in a good sense *to reward*, or in a bad sense *to punish*, Deut. vii. 10; Ps. xli. 10; Isa. lix. 18.—(See Schultens in loc. and in Job, xxiii. 14.) The original may, then, be rendered, “If the righteous suffer affliction in the earth, much more shall the wicked and the sinner;” the meaning of which obviously is, If the righteous cannot escape affliction, the wicked must suffer a great deal more. This, in sense, nearly coincides with the version of the LXX, “If the righteous be

scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" In this way it is understood by Le Clerc, whose version is, "En de justo in terra poena sumitur, quanto magis de improbo et delinquente;" and by Schultens and Dathe, who render it, "Ecce justus in terra traditur neci: quanto magis improbus et peccator." The former interpretation, however, appears to be more suitable to the usual meaning of the words.

ןה sometimes signifies *si, if*, (Noldius, 7,) but more frequently *ecce, behold*. כִּי אֵף "in collatione rerum affirmativa, valet *quanto magis*; in negativa, *quanto minus*;" (Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 516;) but it also denotes *yea, yea also*, Gen. iii. 1; Neh. ix. 18; Ezek. xiv. 21.

CHAPTER XII.

1. *is brutish*—That is, stupid and indocile, and possessed of a mean, base, and grovelling disposition.

2. *will he condemn*—The nominative to ירשיע is Jehovah in the first hemistich, or rather the pronoun הוּא, referring to Jehovah; but it may be rendered, "But a man of wicked devices acts wrong," "impie agit," Vulg.; so the word means 2 Chron. xx. 35, xxii. 3; Job, xxxiv. 12; Dan. xii. 10, &c.

4. *A virtuous wife is a crown to her husband*—An allusion to the ancient custom of putting crowns or chaplets upon the head of new married persons.—(Cant. iii. 11.) These crowns were sometimes of flowers, and sometimes of more costly materials, according to the rank and wealth of the parties.—(See Selden, *Uxor Hebraica*, lib. ii. cap. 15.) Nuptial crowns among the Greeks and Romans were composed of leaves and flowers.—(Potter's *Greek Ant.* l. iv. c. 11; *Adam's Roman Ant.* p. 464. See also Suiceri *Thesaurus* in στεφανος.) The

ceremony of crowning the contracting parties at marriage is still observed in the Greek church, and in some parts of the East.—Harmer's Outlines, p. 6; Parkhurst in עשר.

— *A virtuous wife*—Literally, “a woman or wife of strength;” *γυνή ανδρσα*, LXX; *γυνή ισχυρος*, Theod.; but חיל here and ch. xxx. 10, denotes *virtue*. It is well observed by Michaelis, (Suppl. No. 719,) that in the early stages of society, when the government and the laws had little influence, fortitude was the first and most necessary virtue, and might, therefore, naturally give its name to the other virtues. Hence “virtus” in Latin, and *αρετη* in Greek, which, according to their etymology, denote manly strength and fortitude, came, at length, to signify virtue in general.

6. *The words of the wicked, &c.*—The wicked, by their seducing, deceitful, and treacherous language, form, as it were, an ambush against the life of others. Or, perhaps, the sense may be, that the deceitful and treacherous language of the wicked forms, as it were, an ambush against *their own* life; but the discourse of the righteous preserves them.—Compare ch. i. 16.

— *lie in wait*—*אָרַב*, infinitive, is either used for a noun, or for the preterite.—Glass, p. 288.

7. *are overthrown*—*הפוך*, infinitive for the preterite; so Syr. and Targ. Some render it imperatively, “overthrow (*i. e.* O God, overthrow) the wicked,” Vulg. Drusius, Le Clerc. The LXX render it, *ου εαν στραφη ο ασεβης, αφανιζεται*, “wherever the wicked turn,” &c.

8. *But the perverse of heart*—*נערה*, from *ערה* to *overthrow*, to *pervert*, means, as we may infer from the parallelism, the perverted in understanding, the destitute of wisdom.

9. *is servant to himself*—“That is, who is destitute of servants, and who is under the necessity of officiating for himself.”—Hodgson. So LXX, Syr. Vulg. Arab. Schultens, &c. לו עבד may undoubtedly be rendered, “and hath a servant,” as E. T. Targ. &c. But the version here adopted is more energetic, and renders the antithesis more complete.

10. *But the tender mercies*—That is, what the wicked pretend to be tender mercies. We have been accustomed to hear much of the benevolence of infidels, the philanthropy of deists, and the soft gaiety of Gallic scavans: it is all pretence; self is their idol, and self-indulgence their object, in the accomplishment of which they are little scrupulous about the means. Where self is the idol, the heart is cruel. While they talk of kindness, and friendship, and universal charity, they regard not the cruelty of robbing millions of the consolations of religion; while they clamour about reform, they would, with unfeeling barbarity, exult in the demolition of ancient and venerable establishments; while they speak of harmless gaiety and pleasure, they would treacherously corrupt piety, and pollute unsuspecting innocence. “A righteous man,” so far from injuring a fellow-creature, “regardeth even the life of his beast.”

11. *vanity*—ריקים, either vain persons, or vain things. I translate it in the most general sense, with the Syriac, “He who follows, אַחֲרַי אֲנִי, after vanity.”

12. *The wicked desire, &c.*—The antithesis is obscure, as in many other proverbs; but the meaning seems to be, that the wicked desire all possible means to ensnare and betray; but the righteous produce good works, as a good tree produces good fruit.—(See Cocceü Lex. עֲצֵר.) מַצֹּר is used in this figurative sense Eccles. vii. 26; but some render

it a *fortress, arx*, by which is meant, security from evils. So Vulg. Doederl. Dathe, Le Clerc, &c.

13. *an evil snare*].—That is, not only to catch others, but likewise with which the transgressors themselves are often caught to their own destruction; “for a fool’s mouth is his destruction; and his lips are the snare of his soul.”—Ch. xviii. 7. See ch. x. 14, and note; Ps. xxxv. 8.

14. *A man shall be satisfied, &c.*].—The meaning is, that virtue, both in word and deed, shall meet with a corresponding reward.

15. *But the wise man hearkeneth, &c.*].—Our standard version is, “But he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise;” and the Hebrew may be so rendered; but the version here adopted preserves the antithesis more exactly, and is supported by the LXX and Vulg.

16. *A fool’s wrath, &c.*].—The wrath of a fool is manifested in such a way, as to be immediately distinguished to be the wrath of a fool; but a prudent man throws a veil over the ignominy cast upon him by others, and does not indulge in foolish anger. Or the meaning may be, A fool’s wrath is excited the moment he receives an affront; but a prudent man pardons the ignominy cast upon him.

— *instantly*].—בְּיוֹם “statim,” Vulg.; so the word may be used 1 Sam. ix. 13, xiv. 33; Ps. cxxxviii. 3; or it may mean “in the day,” i. e. the time of receiving an affront, agreeable to the latter interpretation of the verse.—See Le Clerc and Poli Synop.

17. *A righteous witness*].—יִגִּיד צְדִיק, literally, “he who declares righteousness,” i. e. a righteous witness, as appears from its opposition to “false witness” in the second hemistich.

—(Compare ch. vi. 19, xiv. 5, 25.) Thus, by the aid of the parallelism, this verse becomes easy and perspicuous; in the interpretation of which there is much variety, both among the ancients and moderns.

18. *There is that speaketh*—בטא, by a metathesis of the final letter, for בטא, which means to *speak foolishly* or *rashly* Lev. v. 4; Ps. cvii. 33; and in this verse יש בוטה denotes one *who prates rashly, who utters foolish things*, as appears from the antithesis: (see Gussetius and Cocceius in voc.):) but as in Numb. xxx. 7, 9, the only other place where the root occurs, it means simply uttering, without including the idea of rashness, I have retained the received version, which agrees with the LXX. Words are compared to swords, and the piercings of weapons, Ps. lv. 21, lvii. 4, lix. 7, lxiv. 3.

19. *for a moment*—ארגיעה is, perhaps, used adverbially for “in a moment,” “in an instant,” Jer. xlix. 19, l. 44; but Blaney and others take it for a verb.—(See Schultens, Orig. Heb. l. i. c. 11, § 28.) The antithesis shows, that it is to be understood here for *breve tempus, a short space of time, an instant*.

20. *Deceit is, &c.*—The natural sense of the words would seem to be, that those who devise evil have some treacherous purpose in view. This is, probably, the meaning of the ancient versions, and מרמה occurs about thirty-seven times, and always in the sense of *fraud, deceit*; yet the antithesis disappears in this exposition. I am, therefore, of opinion it means *disappointment*; namely, that which the wicked expect from their evil devices is deceitful and fallacious, ending in disappointment, as contradistinguished to the joy in the bosom of the counsellors of peace. “Falluntur qui mala machinantur; qui utilia suadent, lætitiā percipiunt.”—(Dathe.) This is supported by ch. xiv. 8. So Hodgson. Houbigant

and others take it for "tristitia," "acerbitas;" in sense much the same.

21. *There shall no evil*—Instead of יֵאָנָה, Schnurrer, Michaelis, Dathe, and Schulz, read יֵאָוָה *desideratur*, i. e. "nothing evil is desired by the righteous." Though this may, perhaps, be sanctioned by the LXX, it is not supported by MSS.; and the textual reading, "no calamity or affliction shall happen to the righteous," yields an appropriate sense, perfectly in character with a believer in the temporal rewards and punishments under the Mosaic dispensation. Observations which have reference to the Theocracy, ought not to be extended to the general administration of Providence.

23. *A prudent man, &c.*—"Prudence requires, that knowledge should be displayed only on proper occasions; whereas the fool proclaimeth his inconsiderate thoughts, without regard to the circumstances of time, place, or persons."—Durell.

24. *The hand of the diligent, &c.*—"Piger perpetuo alienum consilio indiget, et ab aliis dependet. Quod eleganter tributum vocatur, quod pendere cogatur aliis."—Dathe.

25. *Trouble in the heart*—The enallage of gender in this hemistich is singular, but evident.

26. *The righteous explore, &c.*—The righteous duly examine all their plans and proceedings, but the way of the wicked seduces them, leads them into error and misery. Our authorized version is, "The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour;" but, to extract any meaning from it, it must be understood of a wicked neighbour, and even then, though the remark is true, it is unimportant. Besides, the antithesis is lost in that version. יָתַר, therefore, is best derived from תֹּרַר *to explore, to investigate*.

— *their pastures*—Figuratively, for the business of life, as that by which subsistence is gained. It may, however, be rendered, “The righteous man explores (searches) from his friend,” that is, takes counsel and advice as to the proper way in which he ought to proceed, but the wicked, by following their own paths, are led astray into error.—(So Cocceius in תור.) But the antithesis is better preserved in the version which I have adopted after Michaelis, Doederlein, and Dathe.

27. *The slothful man roasteth not*—The general sense appears to be, as expressed in Mant’s and D’Oyly’s Bible, that “the slothful man, for want of exertion, loses even the fruit of his former labours; but the diligent man sets a just value on it, and converts it to its proper use.” חרך, as a verb, is απαξ λεγ. and it seems impossible to fix its meaning with certainty amidst the discordance of our authorities. In Arabic it denotes *movere, excitare*; hence Schultens renders it “non ciebit;” but, if its meaning is to be determined by the Oriental dialects, we should rather take it to mean *ussit, cremavit*, as it has this signification both in Syriac and Chaldee, which constitute a preponderance of evidence; not to say that they are more analogous to the Hebrew than is the Arabic. If this be allowed, we must adhere to the received version. The ancient versions vary much; but still the notion of *finding* or *obtaining* is common to them all, and this sense is adopted by Parkhurst, Schulz, and others. A derivative of this root occurs Cant. ii. 9, where there can be little doubt it means *lattices*. From this circumstance, I am inclined to accede to the interpretation of Fuller, (Miscel. lib. vi. cap. 13,) who translates it, “‘non clathrabit,’ i. e. non clathris aut cancellis circumdatis asservabit quod venando cepit.”—See Castell and Geier, and particularly Harmer, vol. ii. p. 95.

— *precious wealth*—יקר ought, I think, to be construed with חון, as ch. i. 13, xxiv. 4. So Houbigant.

28. *And in the pathway thereof*—Durell's version and comment are, "In the highway of righteousness is life; but its by-path leadeth to death. ארח is always used in a good sense; but נחיה sometimes in a bad one. See ch. i. 15, vii. 25; Hos. ii. 6. By this construction the verse is cleared of all difficulties, the antithesis is preserved, and there is neither a redundancy or deficiency in the words." Hodgson's version is, "But the by-way leadeth unto death." But the common version is literal, according to the Masoretic points; though all the ancient versions have "ad mortem," reading אל *el*, instead of אל *al*. ררך נחיה, literally, "the way of its paths," a periphrasis for paths; or ררך may mean the journey or proceeding in its paths. The reader must judge which of these expositions is preferable.

CHAPTER XIII.

1. *A wise son, &c.*—There is an ellipsis of שמע in the first hemistich, to be supplied from the second. If מוסר be the participle Hoph. it may be rendered,

"A son becomes wise by the correction of his father;
But *he becomes* a scorner who heareth not rebuke."

So Schultens, Doederlein, Dathe. Or, with De Dieu and Durell,

"A wise son is instructed (or corrected) by his father;
But a scorner heareth not rebuke."

But the first is the most easy and natural construction, מוסר so often occurring as a noun; and it is supported by the ancient versions. Such an ellipsis as it requires is not uncommon, as in verse 2.—See *Walteri Ellipses*, p. 125.

2. *A man shall eat, &c.*—A wise man shall enjoy much good by the discreet use of the valuable faculty of speech,

but those who transgress in the use of it shall experience trouble, and violence, and punishment. That this is the true interpretation, appears from the following verse, which is a reiteration of the same apophthegm. The Parœmiast has elsewhere given similar instructions respecting the government of the tongue; and St. James has a noble lesson upon the same subject, Ep. ch. iii. "To eat" is a scriptural phrase for *to enjoy*, as Gen. xlv. 18; Ps. cxxviii. 2, xxxiv. 9; Isaiah, i. 19, iii. 10. Compare ch. xii. 14, xviii. 20, 21, xxi. 23.

3. *But he that is rash with his lips*—פֶּשַׁק occurs in no other place except Ezek. xvi. 25, where it implies something criminal, and is to be taken "sensu obsceno;" פֶּשַׁק שִׁפְתָיו must also be understood of opening the lips in a reprehensible manner, rash speaking; προπετης χηλεσιν, LXX; "qui inconsideratus est ad loquendum," Vulg. The dialects desert us; the antithesis, however, proves the correctness of this explication.

4. *shall be made fat*—Metaphorically, shall be filled with plenty and abundance, as ch. xi. 25, xv. 30, xxviii. 25; Ps. xcii. 14.

5. *a false word*—דְּבַר שֶׁקֶר may mean a false thing, a treacherous conduct; and in this sense the antithesis is more complete.

6. *Righteousness keepeth, &c.*—Literally rendered, תָּם וְיָרַךְ is "integrity of way," *i. e.* the upright: and הַטָּאֵת is "sin," *i. e.* the sinner: the abstract put for the concrete.

7. *There is that, &c.*—Some are sedulous to amass wealth, and yet are destitute of the true riches, religion and the favour of God; others voluntarily continue poor in the eyes of the world, and yet abound in true spiritual riches.—(See Clemens

Alex. Pædag. l. iii. c. 7.) Πλουτος is used in a spiritual sense by the sacred writers of the New Testament.—See Schleusner in voc.

8. *The protection*]
כפר, being here applied to temporal deliverance, is better rendered “protection” than “ransom.” Money preserves life in many ways; it discharges the pecuniary penalties which may be imposed for offences; it ransoms a man from the hands of robbers, and redeems men from slavery.

— *But do not the poor, &c.*]
Among the various interpretations which have been given of this clause, I prefer that proposed by Durell, who construes it interrogatively. “Doth not the poor hear rebuke? That is,” as he observes, “the rich, by their wealth, can always extricate himself out of difficulties; while the poor man, who has nothing to offer by way of atonement for his faults, meets with rebukes.” לא, in many instances, signifies *annon*, *nonne*, (Noldius, 3,) in all which there is an ellipsis of *an* interrogative. Should this exposition by Durell not be thought satisfactory, it may be rendered, as E. T., “But the poor heareth not rebuke,” meaning, by “rebuke,” the maledictions of those who envy the rich; they are free from the calumnies which attend the rich. “Adeoque licet divitiæ aliquando utiles esse possint, tamen et paupertas comoda sua habet, ut patienter et æquo animo ferri debeat.”—Michæl. Not. Uber. But, whichever interpretation be adopted, it is to be considered as a reflection on what generally happens in human life with respect to poverty and wealth.

9. *The light of the righteous*]
The prosperous state of the righteous shall be a continual source of joy and gladness; but the prosperity of the wicked shall quickly be extinguished. “Light” denotes prosperity Job, xviii. 5, 18; Ps. xcvi. 11;

cxii. 4; Isaiah, lviii. 3, lix. 9; and such is the meaning of "lamp" Job, xxix. 3; Ps. xviii. 29; Job, xviii. 6, xxi. 17; Prov. xx. 20, xxiv. 20, which are analogous to the passage before us. In the New Testament, *φως* is put sometimes for felicity, "beata et felix conditio," as Schleusner expresses it, Matt. iv. 16; 1 Tim. vi. 16; James, i. 17. So we find it used by Homer, *Iliad*, lib. vi. l. 6, lib. xvi. l. 741, &c.

10. *Ignorance*—I take *קָר* for a noun, feminine *קָרָה*, signifying *emptiness, vacuity*; and here, emptiness in respect of wisdom, *ignorance*; because it is opposed to them that deliberate. "Inscitia cum superbia gignit rixam," Dathe.—(See Cocc.) It may, however, mean *a vain, empty person*, who by pride creates contention; and so it seems to have been understood by LXX, Syriac, and Arabic; at least, they take it in a personal sense. Some render *קָר* by "certainly," "certe:" (Noldius, 2; Poli Synop. :) "Certainly by pride *a man* produces contention."

11. *Wealth through vanity*—Many explain this clause of wealth gotten by vanity, *i. e.* by vicious means; but *הַבָּל* does not appear ever to have this meaning: it signifies *vanity, emptiness*, and, in this place, light, empty, and vain pursuits and proceedings; which are often, in Scripture, termed "vanity." So Dathe, Durell, Cocceius, Geier.

— *But he that gathereth cautiously*—The antithesis will lead us to the true interpretation of this hemistich. As the first clause denotes, that wealth is diminished by vain pursuits, the second must mean, that it is increased by diligence and caution. "*עַל יָדוֹ* de diligenti custodia obvium est, 1 Sam. xvii. 22; 2 Kings, xxii. 5, 9; 1 Chron. xxvi. 28."—Dathe. See Dindorfii *Lex. Heb.* in *יָד*, p. 166.

12. *But when the desire cometh*—That is, when it is accomplished, (Vatablus, Dimock,) it is most grateful and

salutary, like the tree of life in the garden of Eden.—See verse 19.

13. *Whoso despiseth the word*—The word and commandment of God.

— *shall be punished*]—לֹא, I think, refers to רַבַּר, and יַחְבַּל לוֹ, literally, “shall be bound to it,” shall be obliged to suffer the punishment it denounces. So Parkhurst, חַבַּל, 5.

— *shall be rewarded*]—יָשָׁלֵם, by a change of the points, may be rendered “shall be safe;” “in pace versabitur,” Vulg.; *σῴσεται*, LXX; *σῳησεται*, Aq. Sym.; “salvus erit,” Dathe; which agrees with the Syriac version.

15. *Good understanding*]—שֶׁכֶל *directing wisdom, prudence*, when it is joined with goodness and kindness, (טוֹב,) procures favour.

— *is rough*]—“inculta et horrida est; adeoque sicut Deo, sic et hominibus invisa, cunctisque execrabilis.”—Michælis, Not. Uber.

19. *The desire accomplished, &c.*]—Because the accomplishment of desire is sweet to the soul, fools abhor to depart from evil, continuing to indulge their base desires and lawless passions. This interpretation I owe to Le Clerc, who observes, that although the chief part of these proverbs contain an antithesis, yet there are several exceptions. נָהִיָּה Niph. of הָיָה, and literally, “desire which is done,” *i. e.* accomplished; “si compleatur,” Vulg. But Dathe, following Arnoldi, appeals to the Arabic *نهي* *interdicere aliquid*, and renders it, “Cupiditas interdicta delectat,” *i. e.* “nitimur in vetitum semper, cupimusque negata;” an explanation approved by Reiske, and by Schulz, in *Lex. Cocc.* הָיָה. The Arabic word, however, has the sense of *fecit ut perveniret*,

(Golius and Willmet, *Lex. Arab.*), which may strengthen, in the opinion of some, the interpretation I have given above of נָהִיָּה. This, at least, may serve to confront Dathe's explanation; but I build little upon appeals to Arabic, as, by such a critical process, a whole host of different senses may be extracted from any given word.

20. *He that walketh, &c.*—The influence of companions is great, in so much that, as it has been often remarked, a man's character may be known by the company he keeps. Evil communications corrupt good manners; but friendly intercourse with the virtuous and wise has a powerful tendency to enlighten the understanding, and to improve the heart. Schultens (*De Defect. Hod. Ling. Heb.* § 210) and Storr (*Obs. ad Anal. et Syntax*, p. 57) discover a force in the expressions of this verse, which few readers will be able to feel. I follow the reading of the Keri.

22. *his posterity his heirs*—Literally, “a good man maketh his children's children to inherit,” *i. e.* he maketh them his heirs; but the treasure which the sinner so eagerly amasses, seldom benefit his descendants; being generally either uselessly hoarded up, or profusely squandered away, and, by a secret fatality, devolve upon some more worthy occupant. From the general observation of mankind, and the concurrent voice of Scripture, we may conclude, that, in the wise ordination of Providence, wealth unjustly acquired “doth not profit.”—Ch. x. 2. Compare ch. xxviii. 8, and note.

23. *Much food, &c.*—In the astonishing discordance of the ancient versions and modern translators, I have adopted that which appears to me the most probable; for probability is the utmost that can be obtained, on account of the ambiguity of several of the terms. The sense seems to be, that by rulers addicting themselves to agriculture, provisions

become plentiful; yet it happens, if they have not judgment, great waste is occasioned by acts of maleadministration, by the prodigal habits of the people, or the desolations of invading enemies. The Jews were an agricultural nation.

24. *He that spareth, &c.*—The parent that neglects the correction of his child, whatever indulgence he may show, acts as if he hated him, because he does not promote his real welfare. Notwithstanding that the truth of this maxim is confirmed by daily experience, how many children are injured by the fond partiality of their parents! By the neglect of early correction, the desires obtain ascendancy; the temper becomes irascible, peevish, querulous; pride is nourished, humility destroyed; and, by the habit of indulgence, the mind is incapacitated to bear, with firmness and equanimity, the cares and sorrows, the checks and disappointments, which “flesh is heir to.” The importance of early discipline is often inculcated by the royal sage, ch. xix. 18, xxii. 15, xxiii. 13, xxix. 15, 17.

25. *The righteous eateth, &c.*—“A righteous man never wants a sufficiency, because his desires are moderate, and he makes a temperate use of God’s blessings: whereas wicked men bring themselves to poverty by riot and dissipation.”—Patrick.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. *Every wise woman*—חכמות, plural, as ch. i. 20, ix. 1, abstractly, “wisdom;” and אולת, in the second line, abstractly, “folly;” but put for a wise, and a foolish woman, or rather wife.

— *her house*—That is, her family. A prudent wife educates her children carefully and piously, restrains her

family with proper discipline, and thus renders them prosperous and happy.

3. *In the mouth, &c.*—The language of fools is called “a rod of pride,” because they often speak high and proud things, and heedlessly attack others with their speech, as with a rod.—Aben Ezra.

— *a rod*—חֹטֶר occurs twice, here and Isaiah, xi. 1, which clearly determines its meaning to be *a rod* or *twig*, germinating from the stem of a tree. It is translated “rod, virga,” by the Syriac, LXX, Vulg. Aq., in Isaiah; and also by LXX, Syriac, Targ. Vulg. and Theod., in Proverbs; and it bears this sense in the Syriac, Chaldee, and Arabic dialects. Yet, because the Arabic حِطَار means *hasta tremula*, Michaelis renders it, “in ore stulti sagitta est,” and adds, “Telis acutis comparari maledicta solent. Ps. cxx. 4.”—Suppl. No. 712. See also Cocceii Lex. ed. Schulz, in voc.

4. *Where no oxen are, &c.*—The general sense of this proverb is, that many very advantageous things are attended with some inconvenience, which, nevertheless, is outbalanced by their utility. Oxen, as the commentators observe, were principal instruments of husbandry in the East, being employed in plowing, in carrying home the crop, and in treading out the corn.—Deut. xxii. 10, xxv. 4.

— *the crib*—Gousset, Schultens in loc. and in Job, xxxix. 9, Dindorf and Simonis in Lex. and C. B. Michaelis, contend, that אֵבוֹם means *area*, i. e. a place in the open air where corn was threshed, one method of doing which was by the treading of oxen.—(Deut. xxv. 4; Lowth on Isaiah, xxviii. 27; Burder, Oriental Customs, No. 716.) But Michaelis, Suppl. No. 14; Schwarz, in Miscel. Theol. et Philol. p. 324; Rosenmuller on Isaiah, i. 3, support the common

interpretation of *stall* or *crib*, *præsepe*. Either of these interpretations will apply to the passages where the word occurs, namely, here, Job, xxxix. 9, and Isaiah, i. 3. and both claim the support of some of the kindred dialects: but the latter is certainly sanctioned by the ancient versions.

5. *A faithful witness, &c.*—Perhaps better thus:

“He is a faithful witness who will not lie;

But he is a false witness who will utter lies.”

6. *A scorner, &c.*—A scorner cannot find wisdom, because he does not seek it with a proper disposition; if he did, he would be no longer a scorner. It is quaintly, but excellently observed by Lord Bacon, that “He that comes to seek after knowledge with a mind to scorn and censure, shall be sure to find matter enough for his humour, but none for his instruction.”—Quoted in Mant’s Bible.

— *is easy*]—נקל, enallege for נקלה to agree with רעת; it is derived from קלל *levis fuit*, and means *easy, not difficult to be obtained*; ευχερης, LXX.

7. *Go from, &c.*—Better, perhaps—

“Go near to a foolish man;

Yet thou wilt not perceive the lips of knowledge.”

“Si vel e regione steteris stulto, nil sani ex eo audies.”—(Dathe.) מנגר *overagainst, in the presence of, e regione*, i. e. near.—Noldius, 1.

8. *The wisdom of the prudent, &c.*—To understand his ways and conduct, constitutes an important branch of the wisdom of the prudent; but fools, deceived by their folly, make a false estimate of themselves. Γνωθι σεαυτον, “know thyself,” was an aphorism by some ascribed to an oracle. “This is a dictate,” as the British sage observes, “which, in

the whole extent of its meaning, may be said to comprise all the speculation requisite to a moral agent. For what more can be necessary to the regulation of life, than the knowledge of our original, our end, our duties, and our relation to other beings?"—(Rambler, No. 24.) Take Schultens' version as a specimen of his hypercritical powers: "*Solida compactio sollertis, est, discernere viam suam; at crassities appacta elumbium, impulsio in fraudem est.*" This profound scholar abounds in such absurdities.

9. *Fools make a mock*—This verse may be rendered,

" Sin exposes the foolish to scorn;
But among the upright there is favour,"

i. e. mutual goodwill, and likewise the favour of God. Hodgson's version is, "Sinners laugh at fools; but between the upright there is mutual goodwill." Houbigant observes, "*Esset magnus Apollo, qui hæc verba sine soloecismo redderet.*" I differ from this learned critic; but let the reader judge.

10. *The heart knoweth, &c.*—The heart alone can appreciate its sorrows and its joys; a truth confirmed by every one's experience.

— *doth not intermeddle*—This must mean, doth not form a true estimate of its joy; for it is not true, that "a stranger," *i. e.* another person, "doth not partake of the joy of the heart." To every heart, surely, there are some who participate in its joys and sorrows; and even strangers, by sympathy, catch some portion of its present feeling; yet they cannot form a correct estimate of it.

12. *There is a way which seemeth right*—Not absolutely right, but that which he pretends to justify, and to regard as right; for "the way of a fool is right in his own eyes."—Ch. xii. 15, xvi. 25.

13. *Even by laughter, &c.*—A depression of spirits often succeeds laughter; and mirth but too frequently ends in sadness. “*Ipsæ voluptates in tormenta vertuntur. Epulæ cruditatem afferunt; ebriitates, nervorum torporem et tremorem; libidines, pedum, manuum, articularum omnium depravationes.*”—(Seneca, in Poli Synop.) The standard version, “Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful,” is not correct; though sorrow may be occasioned *by* laughter, it does not exist *in* it.

14. *The backslider, &c.*—Both the virtuous and the vicious shall receive the due reward of their deeds. סוֹבֵב לֵב, “*recedens corde virtutis desertor*,” Cocceius; and is well rendered in E. T. “the backslider in heart,” *i. e.* a man whose heart recedes from virtue.

— *with his*—מֵעַלֵּי *ex se ipso, from himself.* As the backslider shall be rewarded according to his ways, so shall the good man, מַעֲלִי, from himself, *i. e.* according to *his* ways and actions. יִשְׁבַּע is to be supplied from the first hemistich. Some derive מַעֲלִי from “עֲלָה (*gnale*) *folium, cum affixo, h. e. ex fructibus suis, ex operibus suis.*”—(Buxtorfi Anticritica, p. 579; Poli Synop.) Capellus, Doederlein, Dathe, Houbigant, would alter the text into מַעֲלֵלִי, “*ex operibus ejus,*” without authority, and without necessity.

15. *The simple, &c.*—The apostle says, charity “believeth all things,” (1 Cor. xiii. 7,) by which is meant, that love puts a charitable or favourable construction upon all things, as far as is consistent with justice; but “the simple believe every word,” without thought, and without inquiry. The former proceeds from benevolence of disposition; the latter, from ignorant and stupid credulity.

17. *He that is, &c.*—אִפְסֵי קָצֵר, literally, “short of nostrils,” *i. e.* irritable, ὀξύθυμος, LXX. “*Ira furor brevis est,*” as Horace observes; and Cicero says, “*Sed tamen*

ira procul absit, cum qua nihil recte fieri, nihil considerate potest.”—(De Officiis, l. i. § 38.) Perhaps the bad effects of anger are nowhere expressed with such apostolical force and simplicity as by Ignatius: Οὐ δὲ μερισμός ἐστιν καὶ ὀργή, Θεὸς οὐ κατοικεῖ, “where there is division and wrath, God dwells not.”—(Ad Philadelph. § 8. See Interpol. Ep.) It is observed, by Parkhurst and others, that the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans agree in representing the nose as the seat of anger.

18. *The simple inherit folly*—That is, they embrace folly, and adhere to it, as if it were a paternal inheritance; for the word נחל not only means *to acquire by hereditary right*, but likewise *to possess, retain, possedit, tenuit*.—Geier; Simonis, Lex.

— *shall be crowned*—The prudent shall be adorned with knowledge; the possession of wisdom shall be “a graceful wreath to their head;” (ch. i. 9;) στεφθησονται γγῶσιν, Theodotion. It may, however, mean, that the prudent strenuously embrace knowledge: “strenue sectantur scientiam,” Dathe; κρατησουσιν, LXX. In Syriac and Chaldee, כתר denotes *expectavit*; therefore, Michælis (Suppl. No. 1245) renders the clause, “*callidi expectant, nondura se habere credunt, sed quærun, scientiam*,” αναμενονσι, Aquila; “*expectabunt scientiam*,” Vulg.

19. *The evil bow, &c.*—Wickedness is constrained to reverence and respect virtue. Some understand it differently. “The latter hemistich is here not adversative, but exegetical of the former; and by *gates* we are to understand, according to the Scripture phrase, *the courts of judicature*, which were usually over the gates of the Jewish cities; so that the meaning seems clearly and simply to be this: That the wicked are brought low, when they are arraigned before the tribunal of the judge.”—Durell.

20. *The poor is hated, &c.*]

“ Donec eris felix, multos numerabis amicos;
Nullus ad amissas ibit amicus opes;”

and Horace quaintly, but with much correctness, observes—

“ Diffugiunt, cadis cum fæce siccatis, amici.”

But it is useless to quote authorities for a truth confirmed by daily experience. The sense is, The poor are little esteemed by their neighbours; but multitudes pay court to the rich, and they have many friends, or pretended friends. *אנשׁ* often means, *to love less, minus curare, posthabere*.—(Cocceius; Vorstius, de Hebraismis, cap. 5.) In the same way, *μιστω* is used in the New Testament, as may be seen in Schleusner.—For the application of *ל* in this verse, see Noldius, 2. Compare ch. xix. 4, and note.

21. *He that despiseth, &c.*]

Our authorized version is very emphatical, by the repetition of the pronoun “ he,” and in perfect accordance with the original. Schultens well expresses the force of the Hebrew; “ ut qui miseretur inopum, o beatitudines illius!” Tenderness and mercy to the poor were enjoined by the Law of Moses, (Deut. xv. 7—10,) and frequently recommended by the wise monarch; ch. xvii. 5, xix. 17, xxi. 13, xxviii. 27.—See Ps. xli. 1.

23. *In all labour*]

As it is not true, as a general proposition, that “ in all labour there is profit,” *ל* must not be taken strictly for *all*, but for *many*, or rather *much*; “ in much labour,” *i. e.* in diligence and industry, “ there is profit.” *ל* is sometimes used in this restricted sense; (Cocceius in voc.; Michaël. Suppl. 1158;) and so is *πας* in the New Testament. (See Schleusner in *πας*. 2.) Some understand it of all honest and commendable labour. The antithesis leads us to expound *עמל* of labour; but, as it sometimes denotes *grief*, which is the labour or travail of the mind, it may be rendered,

“ In every affliction there is profit ;” a remark analogous to Eccles. vii. 2, 3.

24. *The crown of the wise, &c.*—Riches constitute a crown, an honour, and ornament to the wise, because they make a proper use of them ; but the opulence of fools only administers to their folly. אֱוֹלָה must, I think, mean *opulence*, not only by reason of the antithesis, but likewise because, in its usual acceptation, it yields no very apposite sense. Schul-tens refers to the Arabic *أل*, med. waw. *crassus* vel *spissus* *fruit*, (see Indices ad Prov. et Job, and Willmet, Lex. Arab.,) and he shows that *παχυς* in Greek means *dives*, *opulentus*, as well as *crassus* vel *spissus*. His interpretation is followed by Parkhurst, Dathe, Schulz, in Cocc. Lex. It must, however, be acknowledged, that this sense of אֱוֹלָה is not supported by the ancient versions, nor by any other passage in Scripture ; and therefore, if the received version be retained, *i. e.* “ the foolishness of fools is folly,” the sense may be, that the “ foolishness of fools,” however it may be surrounded with riches, still remains “ folly,” nothing better, neither useful nor ornamental.—See Le Clerc, and Michælis, Not. Uber.

26. *And his children*—*i. e.* the children of him who has this confidence. The pronominal affix sometimes refers to an antecedent not expressly mentioned, but implied by the scope of the discourse.—Schroeder, Inst. ad Fund. Ling. Heb. reg. 39 ; Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 158.

28. *In the multitude, &c.*—It is a truth acknowledged by the wisest statesmen in all ages, that the chief glory of a king is the abundance of happy and virtuous subjects. “ The decay of population,” says Dr. Paley, “ is the greatest evil that a state can suffer ; and the improvement of it the object which ought, in all countries, to be aimed at, in preference to every other political purpose whatsoever.”—(Moral and Polit.

Phil. lib. vi. cap. 11.) “To increase the number of the citizens, as far as it is possible or convenient, is one of the first objects that claim the attentive care of the state or its conductor,” &c.—(Vattel on the Law of Nations, lib. i. ^{אין חסד} cap. 14.) Yet, while we assert, that the highest honour of a prince, and the chief glory of a nation, is a “multitude of people,” we must assent to the doctrine of Malthus, (Essay on the Principle of Population,) that, from the tendency of population to press upon the limits of subsistence, a great deal of vice and misery is occasioned in the world; and that the most serious evils arise from a redundancy of population. Nevertheless, the principle of population, though it necessarily must occasion some evils, is, on the whole, productive of very beneficial effects, and wisely adapted to a state of discipline and trial.—See Sumner’s Records of the Creation.

— *the prince*]^{רוזן}—רוזן, in the sense of prince, occurs nowhere else in the singular, though often in the plural for princes or counsellors; but the parallelism and the ancient versions confirm this sense. Some refer it to רור, and render it, “a wasting destruction.”—Poli Synop. Schult. Parkh. Dathe, &c.

29. *exalteth folly*]^{That is,} makes his folly manifest to all.—See verse 17, and ch. iii. 35.

30. *A sound heart, &c.*]^{Ease and content, the due regulation of the passions, and a tranquil state of mind, conduce to the wellbeing of the bodily constitution. Some derive מרפא from רפח *remisit*, i. e. a gentle heart; others, more properly, from רפא *sanavit*, a heart of healing, i. e. either a heart that wishes every good to others, a benevolent heart; or one that is sound and healthy in itself. I prefer the more general expression, “a sound heart;” because a sound heart is necessarily a kind and benevolent one. Grotius and Le Clerc quote some appropriate passages from the classics.}

32. *hath hope in his death*].—What can this hope be but the expectation of an hereafter? Therefore, the righteous do not despair in death, like the wicked. A clear intimation of a future state!—(See Dathe's note; Jarchi; Graves on the Pent. vol. ii. p. 253.) But Warburton expounds it of the righteous having hope that he shall be delivered from the most imminent dangers.—Div. Leg. lib. vi. sect. 3.

33. *But that which is, &c.*].—The LXX, Syriac, and Arabic read this hemistich with a negative particle: “But it (*wisdom*) is not known in the heart of fools.” As such an alteration of the text, though approved by Capellus, (Crit. Sac. p. 838, ed. Vogel,) is not confirmed by adequate authority, Buxtorf and Durell propose to read it interrogatively: “But is it known in the midst of fools?” which renders the antithesis complete.

34. *But sin is a reproach*].—This hemistich is rendered “Beneficence is a sinoffering or expiation for nations,” or “The beneficence of nations is a sinoffering or expiation,” by Grotius, Castalio, Vatablus, Geier, Schultens, Le Clerc, Parkhurst. My reasons for adhering to the received version are, 1. It is scarcely justifiable to call beneficence a sinoffering for nations, even in a metaphorical sense. 2. חסר means *to reproach*, *to put to shame*, ch. xxv. 10, and in all languages these are words which bear quite opposite senses, of which examples are given in Pococke, Notæ ad Porta Mosis, cap. 2, p. 136, ed. Twells; Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 897, ed. Dathe. 3. חסר denotes *reproach* in Syriac and Chaldee. 4. This sense is supported by Symmachus, and, probably, by LXX, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate; certainly they do not countenance the former interpretation. 5. It yields an excellent meaning, and renders the antithesis perfect.—See ch. xxv. 10, note.

CHAPTER XV.

1. *A soft answer, &c.*—This is opposed to דבר קצב, literally, “a word of grief or anger;” i. e. words which irritate and give pain.

4. *The healing medicine, &c.*—Kind and tender discourse is elegantly styled “the healing medicine of the tongue;” and its power to heal the sorrowing mind may aptly be compared to the tree of life in the garden of Eden.

6. *is much treasure*—The sense is, that temporal prosperity attends the righteous, but trouble the wicked. Though יסד often means *strength*, yet it denotes *treasure* Ezek. xxii. 25, (compare Isa. xxiii. 18,) and ch. xxvii. 24; which proves that it cannot mean secure or durable treasures, as some imagine.

7. *doeth not so*—יכ may be a noun, denoting *right, rectum*, i. e. “the heart of fools disseminates that which is not right.” So Doederlein, Dathe, Schultens. It is taken for a verb by Durell, who renders it, “doth not establish it.”

8. *The sacrifice, &c.*—For illustration of this verse, compare ch. xxi. 27; 1 Sam. xv. 22; Ps. li. 17, et seq.; Isa. i. 11, lxi. 8, lxvi. 3; Jer. vi. 20; Amos, v. 22; Mal. i. 10. Homer, *Iliad*, lib. i. l. 218, says, Οκε θεοις επιπεισθηται, μαλα τ' εκλυον αυτον.

Seneca excellently observes, “Nec in victimis, licet opimæ sint, auroque præfulgeant, deorum est honos; sed piâ et rectâ voluntate venerantium; itaque boni etiam farre ac fictili religiosi sunt; mali rursus non effugiunt impietatem, quamvis aram sanguine multo cruentaverint.”—See *Poli Synop.*

10. *the way*—That is, the way of righteousness; “viam vitæ,” Houbigant.

11. *Hades and the seats of destruction, &c.*—A fine description of the omnipresence and omniscience of God. Even the mansions of departed souls are open to his inspection and cognizance; how much more, then, does his eye search the secret recesses of the soul! The word אַבְדֹּן occurs in four other places, Job, xxviii. 22, xxxi. 12, from which nothing can be inferred; but the two following texts are important: Job, xxvi. 6, “Hades is naked before him; and the seats of destruction (אַבְדֹּן) have no covering.” The word clearly means a place here, and the Targum paraphrases it by בֵּית אַבְדָּנָא, “house of perdition.”—(See Le Clerc and Rosenmüller.) It occurs also in Ps. lxxxviii. 12, Heb., which Bishop Horsley thus translates:

“Shall thy tender love be published in the grave,

Thy faithfulness in the seats of destruction?”

The Targum on the place renders it, “in the house of perdition.” From these passages we may conclude, that אַבְדֹּן means the place of perdition, “*interritus seu perditionis locus*,” Castell. As it is joined with “Hades,” a term including the regions of departed spirits, whether good or bad, it probably means the mansions where the spirits of the wicked are confined. I do not mean to insist upon this; for it may be doubted, whether it be consistent with the notions which the ancient Jews entertained concerning the state of departed spirits. It must, however, be understood as denoting a place, and if it be not taken for the mansions of wicked spirits, yet it must be considered as equivalent to Sheol, or Hades. אַבְדָּנָא, Prov. xxvii. 20, has the same signification; but אַבְדֹּן, Esther, viii. 6, ix. 5, means destruction.

The belief of a future state does not constitute the express object of the Mosaic revelation; yet that it was made known, though obscurely, by the Law of Moses, and other books in the Old Testament, cannot reasonably be called in question. Nevertheless, it is, perhaps, impossible to ascertain the

precise notions which the ancient Jewish people formed concerning the state of departed souls, and the place into which they are received at death. Windet asserts, that Sheol, or Hades, contains Paradise, and Gehenna, or Hell; “*tam Paradisum quam Gehennam in Sheol contineri certum est;*” (*De Vita Functorum*, cap. 6;) but this and other circumstances mentioned by him are collected out of the later Rabbins, who cannot be admitted as evidence of the belief of the primitive Jews.

That there is an intermediate state between death and the general resurrection, where departed souls are reserved till their reunion with their bodies at the final judgment, is the doctrine of Christianity, and of the Established Church. The declaration of our Lord to the penitent thief upon the cross; the words of St. Paul, (2 Cor. v. 8,) “we are desirous rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord,” which imply, that this presence takes place during the period of absence from the body; the story of the rich man and Lazarus; and the numerous passages in which the soul is supposed to exist separately from the body; are satisfactory evidence of an intermediate state between death and the general resurrection. The same tenet is maintained in the public Formularies of the Established Church.—(See Bishops Burnet and Tomline on Church Art. 3.) We must not, however, represent Christian ideas, any more than modern Rabbinical notions, as the opinions of the ancient Jewish church; an error into which we are apt to fall, in discussing the faith and doctrines of the Hebrews; but they ought to be collected from the Old Testament judiciously interpreted. Though this is a subject of much importance, it would require too great a space to institute an inquiry into it: I must therefore refer, for more ample information, to the following works: Durell on Job, xxvi. 5; Horsley’s Hosea, p. 46, 157, and Sermon; Campbell’s Prel. Diss. 6; Pearson on the Creed, Art. 3;

Parkhurst, Lex. שאל; Wetstein on Luke, xvi. 23; Lawrence on the Unitarian Version; Lowth, de Sac. Poes. Heb. Præl. 7; Magee on Atonement, vol. ii. p. 153; Vitranga on Isaiah, tom. i. p. 432; Bishop Bull's Sermons, 2d and 3d; Peters on Job, part iii. § 6; Burnet, de Statu Mortuorum, cap. 4; Windet, de Vita Functorum.

13. *A merry heart, &c.*—The antithesis would lead us to understand by רוח, in the second line, *the breath*; for as a merry heart renders the countenance cheerful, so does a sorrowing heart produce sobbing, and a difficulty of breathing; yet, as the meaning is excellent in the sense of *mind* or *spirit*, and as רוח נכאה means a troubled or afflicted mind ch. xvii. 22, xviii. 14, I have adhered to the received translation.

14. *But the mouth*—Instead of פני, I follow the Keri, which has פי; it is supported by all the ancient versions and many MSS.—(Kennicott.) The image is the same in both readings, implying that fools addict themselves to and delight in folly.—Compare Isaiah, xlv. 20; Hos. xii. 2, Heb.

15. *All the days, &c.*—It is not true, that all the days of the afflicted are, strictly speaking, evil. It is often asserted in Scripture, that it is good for us to be in trouble and affliction. "Evil" must, therefore, mean *painful, grievous, difficult to be borne*; or עני may mean the *self-afflicted*, those who murmur and repine. The Vulg. Syr. Targ. and Sym. render it "all the days of the poor," *i. e.* are full of pain and trouble. The Hebrew will certainly admit this interpretation.

17. *Better is a repast, &c.*—Better is a repast of the most humble provision where love prevails, than a banquet of the choicest delicacies accompanied with hatred and contention. This is peculiarly applicable to the marriage state, in which

an union, sweetened by mutual affection and endearment, is far preferable to the greatest wealth, or the most splendid station, without the solace of love. Marriages from pecuniary motives never yet produced solid happiness, and are, moreover, productive of the most pernicious effects. Where disgust or dissatisfaction exist at home, it is common to search for pleasure abroad; the spring and source of that criminal dissipation, which brings in its train the decay of every generous sentiment, and the corruption of the moral principle. Should interested marriages become universal, it would require no superior sagacity to predict the speedy ruin of the country. אֶרְחָה occurs, besides this place, 2 Kings, xxv. 30; Jer. xl. 5, lii. 34, which clearly determine its meaning to be *a fixed portion, a stated allowance of food*; not *viaticum, provision for a journey*, as Castell, Taylor, and others explain it, being led into this notion by its relation to אָרַח *iter facere*.—See Harmer's Observations, vol. ii. p. 230 et seq. ed. Clarke, Lond. 1808; and Burder's Oriental Customs in loc.

19. *The way of the slothful man, &c.*—Either the way of the slothful, whatever repose they aim at, is rough, mazy, perplexed; full of briars and thorns, which sting and lacerate them on every side: or, every little difficulty appears insuperable to the sluggard, at least as arduous as breaking through a thorn-fence.—To this effect Aben Ezra: but the first interpretation appears to be supported by ch. xxii. 5; the LXX, οὗτοι ἀσπερχων ἐσπερχόμενοι ἀκανθαίς; and the Syriac, which is, "The ways of the slothful are full of thorns."

22. *Without counsel*—הִפָּר, infinitive used for a noun, as is frequently the case.—(Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 292.) סוּר cannot here mean *a secret*, but an assembly met for the purpose of deliberation, or rather, the counsel or deliberation itself.—See ch. iii. 32, note. Compare ch. xi. 14, xx. 18, xxiv. 6.

— *But in the multitude*].—Dr. Hales thus translates this verse :

“ Without a *privy counsel*, measures fail ;
But in a *Master of the Counsellors*, they shall stand.”

He adds, “ The phrase רב יועץ is improperly rendered in the English Bible ‘ a multitude of counsellors,’ than which, in *state affairs*, nothing can be more ruinous ; for, according to a trite English proverb, ‘ *too many cooks spoil the broth.*’ Rab, in the Chaldean and Persic languages, signified a ‘ *master*’ or ‘ *chief* ;’ as *Rab Mag*, ‘ *Master of the Magi*,’ or the ‘ *Archimagus*,’ Jer. xxxix. 3. *Rab Shakeh*, ‘ *chief butler*,’ Isa. xxxvi. 2. Hence the Jewish title *Rabbi*, ‘ *my master*.’ ”—(New Analysis, vol. iii. p. 175, note.) So also he renders the phrase ch. xi. 14, xxiv. 6 : but רב very often occurs in Proverbs, and always in the sense of *multitude*, *much*, *abundance*, &c. ; it is so rendered by all the ancient versions, never *master* ; it is here joined with יועצים, plural, which seems to demand the rendering, “ in the multitude of counsellors ;” besides, what meaning is there in “ *Master of the Counsellors*” ? Was there ever such an officer ? Or is any such title mentioned or alluded to elsewhere in holy writ ? To this we may add, that רב does not appear ever to denote *master*, except in proper names, most probably of Chaldaic origin. For these reasons, I must reject the interpretation proposed by the learned author of the New Analysis.

24. *The way of life above, &c.*].—“ The way of life above,” being opposed to “ Hades beneath,” may mean a long, prosperous, and happy life in this world. Such a life is destined for the prudent, that they may avoid Hades beneath, that they may avoid a sudden and immature death.—(Warburton, Div. Leg. lib. vi. sect. 3.) Yet it is not to be denied, that by “ the way of life above,” heaven and immortality may be

signified; and, therefore, that the sense may be, that the prudent shall inherit immortality, and avoid the place of punishment, namely, those mansions of Hades, where the spirits of the wicked are confined. The verse may also admit another interpretation; that “the way of life above is to the prudent man,” namely, his hopes and dependence are placed upon the almighty Power above, and he endeavours, in all his conduct, to please God, in order to attain the way of life, and avoid Hades beneath. “*Homo sapiens in omnibus actionibus suis Deum respicit, ut a periculo servetur.*”—Grotius.

25. *the border of the widow*—Namely, her property and possessions.

26. *But the words of the pure, &c.*—This is the authorized version; but I am inclined to believe, that דברי means things, not words, and that the clause should be rendered, “But those (*the thoughts*) of the pure are pleasant, (*or pleasant things,*)” i. e. to Jehovah.—(See *Poli Synop.*) According to this explication, the antithesis is perfect. Some take טהרי pure, for “pleasing to God.”—Michælis, (Not. Uber.) Dathe, who renders it, “*Placent ei sermones suavi.*” Durell’s version is, “But the pure speak what is acceptable to him.” Hodgson’s is, “But pleasing are the words of the innocent.”

27. *But he that hateth gifts*—These must be such as are bestowed for the purpose of perverting right and justice; for it cannot be wrong to receive the gifts of friendship, charity, and gratitude; it might, therefore, be properly translated “bribes,” as Hodgson’s version. As חיה, in Kal, denotes not only *to live*, but *to cause to live, to preserve alive,*” (Parkhurst’s *Lex.*) this hemistich may be rendered, “But he that hateth gifts shall preserve it,” i. e. his house; he shall preserve his family in prosperity. The antithesis seems to

require this version, though the ancient versions do not admit it: "eam stabilit," Dathe.

28. *The heart of the righteous, &c.*—“Non temere effutit quicquid in buccam venit. Nil loquitur nisi diu meditatum: itaque recta et bona respondere solet. Loquitur quæ sunt ad utilitatem.”—Poli Synop.

30. *As the light of the eyes, &c.*—As the pleasures derived through the eye gratify the heart; so does an honest fame exhilarate a man. In this exposition, “the light of the eyes” means the pleasures which we receive through the eyes; and חַדְשׁוֹן עֲצָמוֹ, literally, “fatteneth the bones,” are metaphorical expressions, to denote the making a man cheerful and contented; *i. e.* a good name cheers and exhilarates a man; “reficit et lætificat hominem,” Michaelis, (Not. Uber.) Other interpretations may be found in Schultens and Poli Synop.

31. *that regardeth*—שמע means, 1. *To perceive by the ear, to listen.* 2. *To perceive, to discern, to understand.* 3. *To mind, to regard, to obey.* According to Johnson, the same senses belong to the word “hear;” yet שמע may often be more forcibly, and more perspicuously, translated by some of the words by which it is explained above.

— *the reproof of life*—*i. e.* salutary reproof.

33. *The fear of Jehovah, &c.*—The fear of Jehovah constitutes the fundamental principle inculcated by Wisdom; and is, therefore, properly called the beginning, the excellence, or principal part of religion.—(Ch. i. 7.) The latter hemistich recalls to mind the eulogies on humility in the New Testament, James, iv. 6; Luke, xiv. 11; Rom. xii. 16, &c. Compare ch. xviii. 12.

CHAPTER XVI.

1. *The deliberations, &c.*—We are indebted to God for all we possess; for the power of reason, and the faculty of speech; for every thing we enjoy mentally and corporeally; in short, in him we live, and move, and have our being. Such, I think, is the meaning of this very difficult verse, in the exposition of which there are so many discordant opinions. But we must examine it critically whether it will bear this explanation.

— *in man*—ל often means *in*: (Noldius, 18 :) לאדם may, then, be rendered “in man;” or, perhaps with equal propriety, “with respect to man.”—Noldius, l, 30.

— *The deliberations*—מַעֲרָבִי, from עָרַךְ *ordinavit, disposuit*, means the arrangements of the mind, *i. e.* the counsels, schemes, deliberations.

— *and the utterance*—מַעֲנָה does not here mean *the answer*, but the *power of answering, utterance*; “*eloquendi facultas*,” Mercer. The context requires this meaning; for what can the assertion mean, that “the answer of the tongue is from Jehovah,” but that the power or faculty of speech is derived from him? Thus my version seems to be critically established. To distinguish the two hemistichs antithetically, as in the Vulgate, Syriac, Targum, and several moderns, viz. “The counsels of the heart are man’s; but the answer of the tongue is from Jehovah,” is unjustifiable; for the schemes of the heart are as much from Jehovah as the answer of the tongue: in both he gives the power; the use belongs to the free-will of man.

2. *All the ways of a man*—That is, the course of life which he pursues, his actions and proceedings. However just they may appear in his own eyes, and self-love often renders a man

blind to his own faults ; yet “ Jehovah weigheth the spirits,” he forms a perfectly just estimate of men’s hearts and minds.

— *may be right*—*ἵπ* *clean, pure* ; metaphorically, *just, right*.—Ch. xxi. 2.

3. *Commit thy works, &c.*—In all thy doings, seek the approbation of God ; execute his will ; confide in his superintending care ; and he will give success to thy designs, as far as is expedient for thee.—Compare Ps. xxxvii. 5, lv. 22 ; 1 Pet. v. 7.

4. *Jehovah had made, &c.*—The Almighty, through his own good pleasure, created all things ; and is even so merciful, that he daily feeds and sustains the wicked. “ The mercy of the Lord is everlasting ;” (Ps. c. 5 ;) and “ he endureth with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.”—(Rom. ix. 22.) The Bible translation favours the Supralapsarian doctrine ; but God forbid that we should ever maintain, that it can be consistent with his ever-wakeful mercy to “ create the wicked for the day of evil,” to call millions of human beings into existence, who, at the same time, are doomed, by an irreversible decree, to eternal perdition. The horrible doctrine of Reprobation is now, I hope, generally renounced by modern Calvinists, though they hold others, which, by just and necessary consequence, lead to it. But as their tenets have no authority in Scripture, grammatically and critically expounded ; so it is very certain that they have no support from the passage before us.

According to the translation which I have given of this verse, it is a description of the benevolence of the Almighty, in daily bearing with and sustaining the wicked. But, should the received translation be deemed correct, “ the day of evil” would be considered, by a Jew of the age of Solomon, to mean the day of trouble and affliction ; in other words, the

time of temporal punishment. The sense, then, will be, "Jehovah hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked, *who are reserved, or who subject themselves, to the day of evil, i. e. the day of punishment.*" "Non fecit Deus impium; sed facit ut, quisquis talis est, sit ad diem malum, sit obnoxius poenæ necessario et absque omni dubio secuturæ."—(Reiske.) Bishop Tomline's interpretation is nearly similar: "The true meaning of the passage is, that God made all things to display his own glorious attributes; and that even wicked men, whose existence and frequent prosperity may seem scarcely reconcilable with the divine perfections, will, in the end, be found to furnish the strongest proof of his long-suffering in bearing with their iniquities, and of his power and justice in punishing their incorrigible depravity: upon such men 'the day of evil' will ultimately come: 'the wicked is reserved for the day of destruction; they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.' Job, xxi. 30."—Refut. of Calvinism, cap. 4.

Some, to avoid the blasphemy of attributing affliction or punishment as the object of God in creating any rational beings, explain "the day of evil" thus; That God made the wicked to inflict evil or punishment upon others.—(Parkhurst, ענה.) Others give a different turn to the verse, by taking למענה for a noun; *i. e.* "*facit secundum responsum suum; id est, facit ut respondeat voluntati suæ, et sumat finem non quem ipse vult, sed quem Deus intendit.*"—(Noldius, Annot. 1404.) So, with some variation, it is understood by Glass, Gousset, Schultens, &c. Desvieux (Essay on Eccles. p. 462) renders the verse, "The Lord hath made all things to be evidence of himself, nay, the wicked to be so in the day of adversity."

—*daily*—לִיּוֹם I understand in the sense of *every day, day by day, daily*, as Exod. xxix. 36, 38; Numb. xxviii. 3, 24; Jer. xxxvii. 21; Ezek. iv. 10. The punctuation,

indeed, is different in these places, but we are no longer in bondage to the Masora. "*Dies malus vel mali*, hic est, dies poenæ sive calamitatis: ut phrasis sumitur, Gen. xlvii. 9; Ps. xxvii. 5, xlix. 6; Jer. xvii. 18, &c."—Poli Synop.

— *sustains*]*—*רעה I take for a verb *to feed, to sustain*: "Impium quoque quotidie alit," as rendered by Dathe, who, after Doederlein, observes, that רעה, being feminine, cannot properly agree with יי, which is masculine, and ought, therefore, to be construed as a verb: but every Hebrew scholar must see, that this criticism is not entitled to much weight.

5. *Though hand join in hand*]*—*See ch. xi. 21, note.

6. *Through mercy, &c.*]*—*It is owing to God's mercy that iniquity can be atoned for. Through his great goodness, God has appointed the expiations for sin in the Levitical law; and through the reverence which all his mercies demand, men are induced to depart from evil, and avoid it.

9. *A man's heart, &c.*]*—*Man deliberates concerning his affairs and proceedings; but the event of them is in the all-wise disposal of God. Perhaps this verse may be rendered more conspicuously by a greater deviation from the letter:

"A man's mind deliberates concerning his proceedings;
But Jehovah directeth the issue of them."

The meaning may be illustrated by ch. xx. 24; Ps. xxxvii. 23, and particularly Jer. x. 23: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." This is the authorized version, which is supported by the LXX, Vulgate, and Targum; but Dr. Blaney, after the Syriac and Durell, adopts, in my judgment, a less correct translation; viz.

"I know Jehovah, that his way is not like that of men,
Not like a human being doth he proceed and order his going."

10. *Divination is, &c.*—By the king, we are to understand a wise and virtuous monarch; and the whole relates to his conduct in judicial proceedings, as is evident from the second hemistich. “Divination” rests upon the lips of such a king; that is, by sagacious interrogatories and skilful inquiries, he investigates the truth of the matters upon which he sits in judgment: and thus “his mouth will not transgress in judgment,” *i. e.* he will pronounce an equitable sentence. 𐤁𐤏𐤏 is rendered “divination” by LXX, Vulgate, Syriac, and Targum; and, as divination, properly so called, was forbidden, (Deut. xviii. 10,) it must here mean *sagacity, penetration in discovering the truth.*—(Parkhurst, Lex.) The root is used in a good sense Isaiah, iii. 2. It is not improbable, that Solomon glances at his famous decision about the children of the two harlots, 1 Kings, iii. 16.

11. *A just weight, &c.*—“A just weight and balance” are called “Jehovah’s” and “his work,” because they are his appointment, agreeably to the law, Levit. xix. 35; Deut. xxv. 13, et seq. which requires the use of “a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure.” Compare ch. xi, 1, xx. 10, 23. From which passages, in conjunction with the verse before us, we learn, that it was usual with the Israelites to keep their weights in bags; and that their weights were made of stone, and not of metal, lest they should be corroded by the rust, and, in consequence, become lighter.—Lamy, Apparat. Biblic. lib. i. cap. 15. See Michaëlis, Commentaries on the Laws of Moses, Art. 227, where he has made some curious remarks on Hebrew weights and measures.

12. *It is an abomination, &c.*—Verses 12—15 are spoken of a wise and virtuous monarch, as being alone worthy of the name of king, in the same way as verse 10.

14. *as messengers of death*—The king’s wrath is instantly followed by vengeance, and therefore it may be compared to

the Capidgi, or executioner, sent with a warrant from the prince to put an offender to death. Thus “Benaiah was the Capidgi sent by Solomon to put Adonijah to death, (1 Kings, ii. 25.) A Capidgi, in like manner, beheaded John the Baptist in prison, (Matt. xiv. 10.) Great energy will then be allowed to the term *messengers of death*, if we understand the words of the Capidgi of the Jewish princes.”—Burder’s *Oriental Customs*; also Harmer, vol. iii. p. 372.

15. *In the light, &c.*—“The light of the king’s countenance” means, that, when it is expressive of kindness and benignity, his subjects enjoy life and freedom; contrasted with the preceding verse, in which it is said, that vengeance instantly follows the king’s wrath.

— *the latter rain*—The former and latter rain are often mentioned in Scripture; and, as the Hebrews began their civil year about the autumnal equinox, it is natural to suppose, that “the former rain” was that which fell in October or the beginning of November; and “the latter rain,” that which fell in April; for, “during the summer season, the Eastern countries are rarely refreshed with rain,” as Dr. Shaw observes.—(Travels, p. 335.) The words translated “the former and the latter rain,” (יורה ומלקוש,) are not expressive of first and second, but of two important sorts of rain.—(See Parkhurst and Cocceius on the words.) That the latter rains, or rains in the spring, are necessary to an abundant crop, appears from the testimony of Dr. Russel. “The more wet the spring,” says he, “the later the harvest, and the more plentiful the crop.” This shows the beauty of the comparison. The king’s favour is as grateful as the spring showers, which fertilize the earth, and produce an abundant crop.—See Harmer’s *Observations*, vol. i. p. 71, et seq.

16. *to get wisdom*—קנה for קננה.—See Altingii Fundam. Punct. p. 333.

17. *The highway, &c.*—The Masora notices, that this verse is the middle of the book.

18. *Pride precedeth, &c.*—Destruction presses hard upon pride and a haughty spirit.

20. *He that understandeth the word*—The parallelism inclines me to understand by דבר “the word of God:” he who diligently endeavours to know and to obey it, shall find by experience its salutary effects.—(See Poli Synop.) As דבר, however, means *thing* as well as *word*, it may be rendered, “He who handleth a matter wisely,” as E. T., or “He who is prudent in his affairs:” “Qui prudenter se gerit,” Dathe.—See Le Clerc.

21. *shall be called prudent*—As the Hebrews used the phrase “to be called,” for being really so, (Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 222,) the meaning is, the wise in heart will be prudent, will act with prudence. Doederlein, after Michælis, reads יקרה *obviam venit*, i. e. “Sapienti occurrit vel socius hæret prudens;” for which there is no authority, and the received version is supported by Vulgate and Targum.

— *And the sweetness of the lips*—I suppose, not only eloquence of language, but also an elegant and agreeable enunciation, which certainly increase the effect even of sound doctrine.

22. *But the instruction, &c.*—Whatever instruction fools may pretend to give, it will prove only foolishness. Arnoldi, Doederlein, and Dathe, take מוסר for *a toil or net*, as ch. vii. 22; the latter of whom renders it, “Et laqueus stulto stultitia;” but this is opposed by the ancient versions, and is contrary to the usual acceptation of the words.

23. *The heart of the wise, &c.*]—The well-regulated mind of the wise renders their language and discourse prudent and discreet.

24. *Pleasant words, &c.*]—Such an intimate union subsists between the soul and the body, that whatever delights and exhilarates the mind has a salutary effect upon the body. Compare ch. iii. 8, iv. 22, xv. 30, in which last text “bones” are put synecdochically for the whole person, as in this verse. Pliny treats of the use of honey, Nat. Hist. lib. xxii. cap. 24.

25. *There is a way, &c.*]—See ch. xiv. 12, note, and compare verse 2.

26. *The body, &c.*]—נפש here means the person or body; for neither the soul nor appetite, strictly speaking, “labours” to procure subsistence. It has often this sense.

— *layeth this burthen*]—אָרַב only occurs here and Job, xxxiii. 7. Schultens, who is followed by the German lexicographers, appeals to the Arabic *أكل* *clitellas* vel *sarcinas imposuit*, i. e. the necessity of food lays this burthen, this task of labouring upon him. This sense of the word suits Job, xxxiii. 7, extremely well. It may likewise be added, in confirmation, that the Chaldee אָרַב means *ephippium*, and the Syriac *ܐܪܒܐ* means *sollicitavit*; also that the rendering of the LXX, *ἐκβιάζεται*, and of the Vulgate, “compulit,” give the same meaning, only stript of the metaphor; for to lay the burthen of labouring upon a man, is, in fact, to force and compel him to it.

27. *deviseth evil*]—Literally, “diggeth;” but, as the metaphorical expression “diggeth evil” is scarcely admissible in English, it is better to give the sense, “deviseth” or searcheth for evil, as men dig into the bowels of the earth in search of the precious metals. The image is thus explained by others;

as the verb כרה often is applied to the digging a pit, the word pit being here understood, it denotes to dig a pit, or pit-fall, *i. e.* to devise secret mischief. So Parkhurst, Le Clerc, &c.

— *a burning fire*—By his speech he raises strife, sedition, slander, and spreads abroad mischief like a devouring fire.—Compare James, iii. 6.

28. *And a whisperer*—נרנן only occurs here and ch. xxvi. 20, xviii. 8, xxvi. 22. From the two latter passages we may infer, that it relates to some offence in words; and, as this offence is said to separate friends, it seems to mean *talebearing*, than which few things are oftener wont to disturb the harmony of social union. This interpretation derives considerable support from ch. xvii. 9. The root רנן likewise means *to mutter, to murmur*, (see the Lexicons,) and the ancient versions chiefly confirm it.

— *chief friends*—אֱלֹהֵי denotes *a friend, chief, guide, &c.* but “Cuncti significatus τοῦ אֱלֹהֵי hic conveniunt; sejungit enim principes a subditis, maritos ab uxoribus, amicum ab amico, si aurem ei præbuerint.”—Geier.

29. *A malicious man*—Literally, “a man of violence;” but as it is not the part of violence to entice or deceive, “אִישׁ חָמָס non tam *virum violentum* nuncdenotat, quam *fallacem*; eo quod fallacia sit species violentiæ et injuriæ.”—(Schultens.) I have rendered it by a general term, after the LXX, Syriac, Vulgate. “Homo malitiosus,” Dathe.—See ch. iii. 31, note.

30. *He shutteth his eyes, &c.*—This is a description of the deep meditation of the “malicious man” (verse 29) in devising perverse things for the purpose of deceiving his

neighbour. To avoid the distraction of external objects, "he shutteth his eyes," and, "moving his lips," either muttering, or biting them as people in deep thought are wont, "he perfecteth" his malicious schemes. πρϵ is απαξ λεγ. and he who will examine the kindred dialects and ancient versions will, probably, derive no greater satisfaction than myself: (besides the Lex. see Schultens, Orig. Heb. par. 2, cap. ii. § 20:) I have, therefore, adhered to the traditionary sense.

31. *The hoary head, &c.*—See an admirable essay on the reverence due to a virtuous old age in the Rambler, (No. 50,) a work by which the wisest may be instructed, and the most virtuous may be improved.

32. *He that is slow, &c.*—The classical scholar will call to mind the lines of Horace, lib. ii. Carmen 2.

"Latius regnes avidum domando
Spiritus, quam si Lybiam remotis
Gadibus jungas, et uterque Pœnus
Serviat uni."

33. *The lot is cast, &c.*—The most important matters among the Jews were regulated by lot. The land of Canaan was divided among the tribes by lot; and in the same way Matthias was chosen to the apostleship in the room of the traitor Judas.—(Acts, i. 26. Compare ch. i. 14; 1 Chron. xxiv. 5; Nehem. xi. 1; Esth. iii. 7; Luke, i. 9.) "The lot causeth contentions to cease;" (ch. xviii. 18;) it may, therefore, sometimes very advantageously put an end to private contentions and public hostilities, (Grotius, de Jure Bel. et Pac. lib. ii. cap. 23, § 9,) and may occasionally be used with good effect in the distribution of private property.—(Puffendorf, de Jure Nat. et Gent. lib. iii. cap. 2, § 5.) נח is here the sign of the nominative.—(Glass, p. 71.) בחור "the bottom or midst of an urn or other vessel into which lots are cast."—Parkhurst.

CHAPTER XVII.

1. *sacrificial-banquets*—Literally, “sacrifices of contention;” by which I understand the feasts wont to be made with the remains of peace-offerings, and may therefore be rendered “sacrificial-banquets.”—(See ch. vii. 14, note.) זבח, however, sometimes denotes *to slay for food*; as, 1 Samuel, xxviii. 24; 1 Kings, xix. 21; Ezek. xxxix. 17. “It doth, among the Hebrews, signify *mactare, to slay, and sacrificare, to sacrifice*, as θύειν among the Greeks.”—(Leigh’s Crit. Sac.) See Spencer, de Leg. Heb. lib. iii. cap. 7, who observes, “זבח quod sacrificium aut mactationem notat, ad convivium significandum usurpatur, 1 Sam. ix. 12, 13, xvi. 3.” The hemistich may then be rendered, “Than a house full of feasting with strife, or banquets with strife.” In either case the sense is the same, in the main corresponding with ch. xv. 17.

2. *And shall have part*—As חלק signifies both *to divide*, and *to share, to participate in* such division; the second hemistich may mean, either that the wise servant shall be appointed, on account of his wisdom, to divide the parental inheritance among the brethren; or he shall himself participate in the inheritance, shall be coheir with the brethren. Either way understood it is descriptive of the excellence of wisdom; but the particle בִּין among, in the midst of, favours the latter, as Michælis observes, Notæ Ueberiores.

3. *The fining-pot, &c.*—The sense is, As the fining-pot trieth silver, and the furnace gold, so does Jehovah try the hearts of men.—See Jer. xi. 20, xvii. 10; Ps. vii. 9.

4. *A wicked doer, &c.*—The wicked listen with pleasure to those who utter scandal and falsehood; and those addicted

to the odious vice of lying lend a willing ear to a malevolent tongue; both thereby gratify their malignity. It may amuse, certainly not instruct, to peruse the version of Schultens, who here out-Herods Herod: "*Pigmentis pollens nitorem inducit super labium vanitatis; fucum splendide comens super linguam vastissimarum cupiditatum.*" We may apply to him the words of Michælis, expressed upon another occasion: "*Schultensius perquam coacte (vertit,) et ut commentario magis indigeat quam Hebraica. Commentarium in notis addidit, non describendum.*" מִזִּין put for מִזִּוִּין, which is the reading of some MSS. (see Kennicott,) and proved by the parallelism; yet Gousset and Schultens (whom see) do not acquiesce in this remark.

6. *Children's children, &c.*—The aged and their numerous descendants reflect mutual honour and dignity upon each other.

7. *The lip of excellency*—“The lip of excellency” (as E. T. margin) denotes the speaking grave, dignified, and excellent things with elegance and authority. As this cannot belong to a fool, his claim to excellent speech must be mere pretence, and, consequently, unbecoming in one who can utter little but folly. נֹאֵרָה may be derived either from נֹאֵר *decere*, or נֹאֵר *desiderare*.—Buxtorf, *Lex. Michælis*, Not. Uber.

8. *A gift, &c.*—The effect of gifts and bribes is great; they are esteemed as valuable gems; and wherever they are bestowed they produce favour and success to the donor; for “every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.”—(Ch. xix. 6. Compare ch. xviii. 16, xxi. 14.) This is an observation upon what frequently happens in human life, without any commendation of it. “*Id demum in consuetudinem abiit, ut, qui regem adibat, nunquam sine dono compareret, atque inde mos ad alios quoque magnates, imo et ad æquales, qui invisebantur, transivit.*”—Jahn, *Archæol. Biblica*, § 177, p. 252.

— *it prospereth*].—The primary meaning of שָׁכַל I take to be *wise, prudent*; and hence, as prosperity and success are often the result of wisdom and prudence, it denotes *to prosper*, in Hiph. *to render prosperous, to promote one's success*.—Deut. xxix. 8; 1 Kings, ii. 3; Jer. x. 21, xx. 11, xxiii. 5; Josh. i. 7, 8; Isa. lii. 13.

10. *Reproof, &c.*].—This version is literal, and coincides with the Vulgate. חָח is best deduced from נָחַח *descendere*, “*descendit increpatio in prudentem, i. e. gravior eum afficit, quam si percutias stultum centies*.”—(Cocc. Lex.) But some derive it from חָח *fractus fuit, territus fuit*: “*Reproof aweth*,” Eng. margin; συντριβει απηλη, LXX.

11. *Surely a rebellious man, &c.*].—Rebellion, whether against God, or against lawfully constituted authorities, is productive of evil; “*but a cruel messenger shall be sent against rebels*,” they shall be severely punished. It is not true, according to the English translation, that “*an evil man seeketh only rebellion*.” מָרִי, therefore, must be put for a rebellious man; the abstract for the concrete. Or מָרִי may be understood: מָרִי “*a man of rebellion*,” *i. e.* a rebel.—See Geier and Le Clerc.

12. *Let a bear, &c.*].—See Parkhurst, בָּר, and the authors there cited.

14. *The beginning of strife, &c.*].—As in breaking down the banks of a river, the inundation, though small at first, continues to increase till the whole country is overflowed; so strife is trifling at its commencement, but, if indulged, increases to insatiable animosity: therefore, dismiss contention before it becomes fierce and unappeaseable.

— *be meddled with*].—The word גָּלַע occurs only here and ch. xviii. 1, xx. 3, in all which the traditionary sense of *meddling* or *engaging in* is very applicable. Thus, in the

present instance, “before contention be meddled with,” *i. e.* before engaging in contention, at its very first origin, dismiss it, otherwise it will grow into irreconcilable hatred. But Schultens, Simonis, Michælis, Schulz, Parkhurst, Dindorf, and Castell, give it the sense of *deriding, scorning*, which may be very well applied to the passages where it occurs. The ancient versions are at variance among themselves; and little assistance is to be had from the dialects; for I cannot think that the Arabic جلع *patuit os, labiis non tegentibus dentes*, gives much support to the latter interpretation.

16. *Wherefore is there, &c.*—This rendering is supported by the ancient versions; but it may be differently translated :

“Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool?

To acquire wisdom? But he hath no heart for it.”

To this effect De Dieu, Jun. and Tremel., Schultens, Dathe.

17. *A friend loveth, &c.*—True friendship is as warm in adversity as in prosperity; and it is the ordination of Providence, that a brother should assist his brother in distress.

18. *in the presence*—That is, in the presence of him to whom, or for whom he becomes surety. The verse contains an admonition against imprudent suretiship.—Ch. vi. 1, note.

19. *And he that exalteth his gate*—This expression is, probably, to be taken figuratively, for proud and arrogant conduct, which whoever uses, as it were, seeks destruction. But it will admit a different exposition. “*Melius forsan non de ore exposueris. Ostia oris Michas, vii. 5, dicit, nec πύλαι στοματος Græcis ignotæ. Unde exponere liceat,—amat peccatum qui amat jurgia: et qui os insolentius diducit, quærit interritum.*”—(Doederlein. So Poli Synop.) A less probable explication is given by Le Clerc and Burder.

20. *He that hath a double tongue*].—Literally, “he that turns with his tongue,” “*qui vertit linguam*,” Vulg., by which duplicity of speech is signified: *ανηρ ευμεταβολος γλωσση*, LXX. So Durell; but E. T. is admissible, “he that hath a perverse tongue.”

22. *A merry heart, &c.*].—Cheerfulness of spirit has a beneficial influence upon the body, and contributes to its health and welfare. “The physical state of the body is most happy, when the mind enjoys a moderate degree of gaiety, such as is generally met with in healthy and virtuous persons. The circulation of the fluids and perspiration are then carried on with proper vigour; obstructions are thereby prevented or removed; and by this lively and uniform motion, not only digestion, but likewise all the other functions of the body are duly performed.”—Willich’s *Lectures on Diet and Regimen*, chap. 10.

— *maketh a good medicine*].—The critics are perplexed with *נקח*, referring to different words in Arabic and Syriac, but there is no necessity for having recourse to the dialects, as, in Hos. v. 13, the only other place where the root occurs, it has clearly the sense of *healing* or *curing*; and hence, as a noun, *that which heals, a medicine*. This verse is parallel to ch. xii. 25, xiv. 30, xv. 13, 15, also ch. iii. 8, iv. 22.

23. *The wicked man, &c.*].—The second hemistich shows, that this verse relates to bribes given to pervert those who administer justice.

24. *in the ends of the earth*].—“*Oculi stultorum non ad sapientiam diriguntur, sed in alia omnia longissime abeunt; vel vagi sunt ac levitatem arguunt.*”—Michælis, Not. Uber.

26. *for equity*].—Durell renders it, “It is contrary to right to strike princes:” so Dimock and Hodgson.

27. *of a forbearing spirit*—Literally, “cool of spirit,” i. e. not easily irritated, forbearing.

28. *Even a fool, &c.*—An Arabic tetrastich, very applicable to this apophthegm, is quoted by Good on Job, xiii. 5 :

“Keep silence, then,—nor speak, but when besought;

Who listens long, grows tired of what is told :

With tones of silver though thy tongue be fraught,

Know this—that silence, of itself, is gold.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

1. *He that separateth himself, &c.*—The meaning of this very difficult verse seems to be this: He who separates himself from sinners seeks wisdom, the object of his desire; he deals not in folly, but in all sound wisdom. “Suspīcor נפּרד dici hominem, qui se a consortio vulgi sejungebat, ut otiosius et liberius sapientiæ operam daret: quemadmodum postea dicti sunt פרישין pharisæi, semoti a vulgo studiis et moribus.”—(Le Clerc.) According to this interpretation, Durell renders the first hemistich, “The contemplative man seeketh that which is desirable;” and Hodgson likewise, “A retired man pursueth the researches he delighteth in.” Others understand the verse in malam partem, and interpret נפּרד of one who thinks differently from others, who pertinaciously adheres to his own opinions, and is thus separate from others; “homo ὁμογενομενος.”—(Cocceius, Dathe, Geier, Doederlein, Schul-tens.) Such a one seeketh his desire; he intermeddled with sound wisdom, but never attains it.

— *his desire*—The ל in לתאווה is redundant, (Noldius, 44,) or it may mean *according to*.

2. *A fool hath no delight, &c.*—A fool has no pleasure in acquiring and contemplating wisdom; his delight is to pour

out the frivolities of his own mind, and to show himself off, as he vainly imagines, to others.

3. *When the wicked cometh, &c.*—The sense is, Folly is accompanied with contempt, vile and ignominious conduct with reproach.

4. *The words, &c.*—The second hemistich shows, that “man” here means a wise man, as Aben Ezra interprets it. The words of the wise are “as deep waters,” not shallow, but profound, inexhaustible, and replete with knowledge; and the fountain of their wisdom flows in abundant streams, to the delight and advantage of those who enjoy their society and conversation.

5. *It is not good, &c.*—This is founded upon the law, Lev. xix. 15; Deut. i. 17, xvi. 19, which forbids any respect of persons in judgment.—Compare ch. xxiv. 23.

8. *The words of a talebearer, &c.*—I have retained the English translation, though very unsatisfactory, because it seems impossible to determine, with any certainty, the meaning of כַּמְתִּלְהִמִּים, which only occurs here and ch. xxvi. 22, where the same words are repeated. Our translators, with several others, derive it, by a literal metathesis, from תִּלְהַךְ *tundere*. Schultens, in his Commentary, appealing to the Arabic *أف* *avide deglutivit*, considers it as a noun formed from the eighth conjugation, denoting *what is greedily swallowed, dainties, nice bits*. According to this explanation of the word, the translation may be, “The words of a talebearer are as dainties; and they descend into the inmost parts of the mind,” *i. e.* they are listened to with pleasure, and eagerly swallowed, like the most delicious dainties. This interpretation is approved by Simonis, Michælis, Dathe, Schulz, and I should have adopted it, had the Arabic supplied

an unvarying evidence; but it unfortunately happens, that the Arabic *لهم*, in the fourth conjugation, means *inspiravit*, and Schultens once adopted that sense, (*Animadvers. inter Opera Minora*, p. 225,) thus explaining the verse: “*Verba susurronis, ut si numjine quodam essent afflata, ita descendunt et penetrant in penetralia cordis.*” To the same effect Capellus and Le Clerc. The same Arabic word also, as to its textual letters, but differently pronounced, means *generositate præcellens, magnificus, liberalis*.—(See Golius.) Nothing certain, then, can be drawn from the Arabic; and the other dialects, as well as the ancient versions, give no assistance. Other interpretations may be seen in Schultens in loc.

9. *A great waster*].—“*Etiam remisse se gerens in opere suo frater est* *לבעל משחית* *domino disperditionis, hoc est, disperdenti seu dissipanti.* Sensus: Ignavus perinde perdit res suas ac prodigus.”—Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 94.

10. *And is safe*].—*נשגב*, literally, “exalted or elevated;” and so it is rendered by LXX, Vulg. Targ. Aq. Sym. Theod.; i. e. elevated to a place of safety. The name of Jehovah means Jehovah himself.—Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 896.

11. *The rich man's wealth, &c.*].—Ch. xiv. 20, (see note) and some other passages, describe the influence of riches with the bulk of mankind; but this verse delineates the effect of riches upon the possessor, who generally confides in them as his tower of strength. Yet the possession of them seldom, perhaps never, realizes the ardent expectations indulged with so much fondness during the acquisition. The impotence of wealth is described by our great moralist, in the 165th number of the Rambler, with the vigour and energy peculiar to himself.—Compare ch. x. 15, and note.

12. *Before calamity*].—The meaning may be, either that the heart is proud and haughty before it is humbled by pain,

and trouble, and calamity: or, as Hodgson renders it, "Haughtiness of heart is the forerunner of a man's ruin," corresponding with ch. xvi. 18, and this latter is, perhaps, preferable.

14. *The spirit of a man, &c.*—A lofty spirit can endure with fortitude the pains of disease, and the strokes of adverse fortune; but the wounds of a lacerated mind few have the magnanimity to sustain.

16. *A man's gift, &c.*—יִרְחִיב maketh room, *i. e.* maketh way, procures an approach or access; and יִרְחֹנֵה introduces him to the great.—Compare ch. xvii. 8, xxi. 14.

17. *He seemeth just, &c.*—The man who first pleads his cause may make out a case apparently just and equitable; but when his antagonist comes, his false pretensions are detected, and it is discovered which party is right. I am inclined, however, to take דִּקְרֵהוּ, by an alteration of the points, for the imperative, with Dathe and Schulz, and to render it, "But when his neighbour cometh, then search him out." Audi alteram partem, is an equitable rule in every question; and, according to this translation, the verse contains a direction to suspend our judgment till both parties are heard.

18. *The lot, &c.*—See. ch xvi. 33. Some observations on this subject may be found in Augustine, de Doctrina Christiana, lib. i. cap. 28, and Dio Chrysostomus, Orat. in Fortunam.

— *And divideth*—That is, their several shares, giveth them their allotments.

19. *A brother offended, &c.*—This is a difficult verse. The authorized version, I think, gives the true sense, by properly supplying the ellipses. The contentions of brethren are the most difficult to be appeased: "accerrima ferme

proximorum odia sunt," according to the well-known remark of Tacitus. The LXX, Vulgate, Syriac, render פֶּשַׁע "a brother assisted by a brother;" but פֶּשַׁע means *to transgress, to offend*, and the Niph. פֶּשַׁע may be *one transgressed against, one offended*.—(See Parkhurst.) Other interpretations may be seen in Schultens in loc. and Animadvers. inter Opera Minora, p. 227.

— *The contentions, &c.*—The contentions of brethren "are like the bars of a castle," durable, and difficult to be overcome; they exclude all friendly intercourse, and almost preclude the possibility of reconciliation. "Ut repagula foribus objecta introitum impediunt; ita litigia fortitur præcludunt aditum reconciliationi, vel amori fraterno."—Geier.

20. *A man's belly, &c.*—"Nutritur corpus cibo, animus dictis: utrumque oris ministerio."—Doederlein. Compare ch. xiii. 2.

21. *they that love it*—Namely, the tongue. It may be taken either in a good or bad sense; probably here including both, as it seems to be connected with the preceding verse; and the sense, taken in connexion, appears to be, that a man shall be remunerated according to the use he makes of speech.

22. *Whoso findeth, &c.*—"Wife" means a good wife, as Vulgate, LXX, Syriac, and Arabic render it; but we are not, therefore, to conclude, with Houbigant and Kennicott, (2d Diss. p. 189,) that שׁוּבָה should be inserted into the text: these translators, probably, added the epithet for the sake of perspicuity. It is usual with the sacred writers to use a noun without any epithet, when goodness and excellence is intended to be included in the term. Thus, "name," ch. xxii. 1, for a good name; "way," ch. xv. 10, for the good

or right way; "answer," ch. xv. 23, for a just and proper answer; "a king," ch. xvi. 10, for a wise and virtuous king.—(See ch. xxv. 11, also Eccles. vii. 1, 28.) Even in the most general sense the proposition is true, as opposed to concubinage; implying, that marriage is preferable to the indulgence of illicit love, and is approved by the Lord. See Doederlein, who makes some very pertinent observations, both with respect to the true reading, and true explication of the passage.

24. *A man that hath, &c.*—A man that hath many acquaintances and pretended friends is often led into ruinous expenses and pursuits; there is, however, a real friend whose love and kindness exceed even a brother's. Others understand it differently. "A man by being friendly shall have friends," as Hodgson renders it, and so Michælis, Not. Uber., Poli Synop.; thus referring חתרוּעַ to the root רעה *pascere*; but I think, with Schultens, that it must analogically be derived from רעע *frangere*, in Hithpaël, is ready to break or ruin himself. So Simonis, Parkhurst, Cocceius, Dathæ, &c.

CHAPTER XIX.

1. *though he be rich*—E. T. is, "and is a fool," but as this is synonymous with "perverse in his lips," כסיל must mean *confident*, (see ch. iii. 26, note,) and, by a metonymy of the effect for the cause, it denotes him who is rich. "The rich answereth roughly;" (ch. xviii. 23;) they are proud, haughty, confident; he, therefore, who is haughty and confident is generally the same as he who is rich. The antithesis, and the parallel passage ch. xxviii. 6, confirm this interpretation.

2. *Also that the soul, &c.*—The English version here adopted yields a good sense, namely, Ignorance is prejudicial, and precipitation leadeth into error. But as the Orientals have, strictly speaking, no reciprocal pronoun, נפש is often used in its stead; (Robertson's Gram. p. 317; Hackspan, Disputationum Sylloge, p. 149;) and the first line may, therefore, be rendered, "Surely to be without knowing oneself is not good." So the Syriac, *ܡܠܝ ܢܦܫܐ* "he who knows not himself;" and the Targum, (and perhaps Vulgate,) and Durell.

4. *many friends*—That is, pretended friends, men eager to court the acquaintance of the rich. יפּרר is separated from his neighbour, *i. e.* is deserted by him, ch. xiv. 20.

7. *do hate him*—Not absolutely hate him, but little respect him, as שׂנא is used ch. xiv. 20, where see the note.

— *they are not to be found*—המה may refer to אַמְרִים, he pursueth his pretended friends with words, but they are unavailing; (see Dimock;) but, perhaps, more properly to "friends," who, though he pursues them with words, "are not," *i. e.* he cannot procure their friendship.

" His familiars to his buried fortunes
Slink all away; leave their false vows with him,
Like empty purses picked: and his poor self,
A dedicated beggar to the air,
With his disease of all-shunn'd poverty,
Walks, like contempt, alone."—*Timon of Athens*.

מרעהו, Jod is wanting before הו, (Buxtorf, Thesaurus, l. ii. c. 8,) or it may be put distributively for each of his friends.
—Michælis, Not. Uber.

10. *Delight, &c.*—By delight is meant the luxury, and splendour, and elegance attendant on wealth and power. It

is not seemly for fools to be possessed of these, as they turn them to the worst purposes : much less is it proper for princes to be under the rule and direction of servants, men of low habits and mean education, who too often employ their influence to gratify the passions of their superiors.—(Compare ch. xxvi. 1.) Hunt renders it, “ It is not seemly for a fool to hold the reins of government :” this perfects the parallelism; but this sense of תענוג is not supported by adequate authority. It is rendered “ delight” by LXX, Syr. Targ. Vulg., and must have this meaning Eccles. ii. 8; Cant. vii. 7, Heb.—See Michælis, Suppl. No. 1929.

12. *The king's wrath, &c.*—Better perhaps, “ The king's wrath roareth as a lion.”—Syr. Targ. Dim. Durell. But see Geier.

13. *And the contentions of a wife, &c.*—The allusion in this hemistich is generally thought to be to an old and decayed house, through which the rain continually drops, rendering it highly disagreeable to inhabit. Durell supposes that the allusion is to “ the dropping of the eaves of a house, or any continued gentle falling of water, than which nothing is more apt to be tiresome and distracting.” Mr. Harmer thinks that it refers to the arbours made of the boughs of trees upon the house-tops, in which the inhabitants of those sultry regions were accustomed to sleep in summer. “ Egmont and Heyman tell us that at Caipha, at the foot of mount Carmel, the houses are small and flat-roofed, where, during the summer, the inhabitants sleep in arbours made of the boughs of trees.”—(Harmer's Observations, vol. i. p. 273.) “ Dr. Pococke in like manner tells us, that when he was at Tiberias, in Galilee, he was entertained by the Sheik's steward, and that they supped upon the top of the house for coolness, according to their custom, and lodged there likewise, in a sort of closet,

about eight feet square, of a wicker-work, plastered round towards the bottom, but without any door, each person having his cell.”—(Ibid. p. 274.) “ However pleasant,” says Mr. Harmer, “ these arbours and these wicker-work closets may be in the dry part of the year, they must be very disagreeable in the wet, and they that should then lodge in them would be exposed to a continual dropping. To such circumstances then, probably, it is that Solomon alludes, when he says, ‘ *It is better to dwell in the corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman in a wide house,*’ Prov. xxi. 9, xxv. 24. A corner covered with boughs or rushes, and made into a little arbour, in which they used to sleep in summer, but which must have been a very incommodious place to have made an entire dwelling. To the same allusion belong these other expressions, that speak of the contentions of a wife being like a continual dropping, Prov. xix. 13, xxvii. 15 : put together they amount to this, It is better to have no other habitation than an arbour on the house-top, and be there exposed to the wet of winter, which is oftentimes of several days continuance, than to dwell in a wide and commodious house with a brawling woman, for her contentions are a continual dropping, and, wide as the house may be, you will not be able to avoid them, and get out of their reach.”—Ibid. p. 277.

— *a continual dropping*].—טורר only occurs here and ch. xxvii. 15. In Syriac, Chaldee, and Arabic, it denotes *to impel, urgere*: (Schultens, and Michælis, Suppl. No. 924 :) hence it may here mean, “ either *impulsive, impetuous*, or *continual*, when one thing doth, as it were, continually propel or thrust forward another.”—Parkhurst. See LXX, Aq. and Sym., whose versions are learnedly discussed by Hunt on ch. xxvii. 15.

14. *House and riches, &c.*].—Houses and riches are often possessed by hereditary right; and though these are the gift

of God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, yet a prudent wife is more particularly from the Lord; because, first, she is a more valuable possession than riches; secondly, God bestows this prudence upon her; thirdly, a virtuous union in marriage is not only approved by the Lord, but, whenever it takes place, ought to be attributed to his especial favour. Hence it follows that a prudent wife is deserving of the greatest regard and tenderness; and that prayers should be addressed to Almighty God by those who are deliberating upon marriage, to direct their choice, and to bless them with pious and discreet partners.

16. *the commandment*—That is, the laws and precepts of God; though it may include the commands of parents and instructors.

18. *And thy soul, &c.*—By early chastisement thou wilt prevent the pain of beholding his vice and profligacy, in comparison of which thou couldst wish to follow him to the grave. This clause may be differently rendered: “Incline not thy soul to his destruction,” *i. e.* by a foolish indulgence, Dimock. “But let not thy soul desire to kill him,” *i. e.* correct him with due moderation, not with too great severity, Aq., Vulgate, Poli Synop. Or, if המיתו be derived from המה *tumultuit*, it may be rendered as E. T., “Let not thy soul spare for his crying.” נשם נפש is a phrase for earnestly desiring, Deut. xxiv. 15; Ps. xxiv. 4, xxv. 1, lxxxvi. 4; Jer. xxii. 27, xlv. 14; Hos. iv. 8; Ezek. xxiv. 26, Heb.

19. *A man of great wrath*—Instead of גרל, many MSS. the Keri, and the ancient versions read בגרל, *i. e.* a man of great wrath, *iracundus*; this reading seems, therefore, to be supported by sufficient authority; but Gousset defends the textual reading.—Lex. in גרל. See Michælis, Not. Uber. Schultens, and Capelli Crit. Sac. p. 233.

— *thou must do it again*—There is not sufficient evidence for reading יוסף instead of חוסף, *i. e.* “though thou deliver him, he will do it again;” yet this reading is adopted by Michælis, Doederlein, and Dathe. The sense is much the same either way. Durell’s version is, “For notwithstanding thou mayst have interposed, thou must do it again.”

20. *in thy latter end*—That is, in thy old age; (see Geier;) but Jun. and Trem. Piscat. Le Clerc, Dathe, render it, incorrectly I think, by “tandem,” “ut tandem sapiens sis vel fies.”

21. *Many are the devices*—The designs of man are many and variable; but the purposes of God are sure, permanent, irrevocable. The mutability of man is here opposed to the immutability of the Most High.—Compare Isaiah, xiv. 26, 27, xlv. 10.

22. *A desirable thing*—חַמּוּת is understood by many in an active sense, *i. e.* “a man desires to be kind;” taking “man” for a good man, as in the next line is meant a poor, but honest man. It is best, I think, to take it in a passive sense for that which is desirable, “id quod desideratur;” a sense adopted and defended by Gousset, Schultens, Hunt, &c.

— *a liar*—כֹּזֵב signifies *a deceiver* in general; one who is no more to be trusted in his actions, than credited in his words; “who is all artifice and fraud; who keeps no faith, is true to no engagement; and so is incapable of being a true friend.”—(Dr. Hunt in loc.) The antithesis, according to this view of כֹּזֵב, is sufficiently correct.

23. *And he that is full of it*—שָׂבֵעַ means he who is full, namely, of the fear of Jehovah: or the ellipsis may be supplied as in E. T., “he who hath it,” viz. this fear, “shall

abide satisfied."—Michælis, Not. Uber. But see Schultens and Cocceius in voc.

24. *A sluggard, &c.*—Many of the Orientals use neither knives, forks, nor spoons, but only their fingers and hands, in eating even soups and pottage. This custom may illustrate the passage before us. The slothful man, after putting his hand into the dish, is too indolent to lift it to his mouth. This interpretation is questioned in a note to Clarke's edition of Harmer's Observations, (vol. ii. p. 50,) because "the Arabs, in eating, do not thrust in their whole hand into the dish, but only their thumb and two first fingers, with which they take up the morsel, *lukme*, and that in a moderate quantity at a time. I take the sense, therefore, to be, that the slothful man, in place of taking up a moderate mouthful, thrusts his *hand* into the *pillaw*, or such like, and takes a *handful* at a time, in order to avoid the trouble of returning frequently to the dish." To this it may be answered, that the Arabs do thrust their whole hand into the dish, according to the testimony of Le Bruyn and D'Arvieux, (*ibid.* p. 49,) and that, supposing they do only dip the thumb and two first fingers into the dish, this may be called *the hand*. The explanation proposed in the note above quoted does not show the reason why a sluggard will not bring his hand to his mouth again: the interpretation I have given, therefore, appears correct.

— *in the dish*]—חבץ only occurs, besides here and ch. xxvi. 15, in 2 Kings, ii. 20, xxi. 13; 2 Chron. xxxv. 13, where it undoubtedly means a *pot*, *pan*, or *dish*; and, as this signification is so apposite in Proverbs, we need not hesitate to adopt it. The LXX and Syr. render it "in his bosom;" the Vulg. Targ. (though the Chaldee word used may, perhaps, mean a *pot* or *dish*; see Castell and Buxt. Lex. Talm.) Aq. and Sym. "under his arm-pits;" each of which presents a strong image

of idleness, but, at the same time, they are not confirmed by the Hebraic usage of the word, nor by Oriental customs.—See Hunt's excellent note in loc.

25. *Smite a scorner, &c.*—Stripes have a beneficial effect upon a scorner, and reproof upon one that hath understanding. I take פתי to be put in apposition with גל, and to mean the same person; i. e. smite a scorner, and this simple fellow, the scorner, will become wise. This is the exposition of Schultens, and it is strongly confirmed by the antithesis. It is true, that פתי and גל are generally discriminated, as denoting two different degrees of the same character; (ch. i. 4, note;) but yet, as every scorner is a simple man, it is not incongruous to predicate them of the same person. Abstract terms cannot always be used with philosophical precision. It is obvious that this precept, like some others of a similar kind, can only extend to those whose character or office give them a right to use reproof and chastisement.

26. *He that wasteth, &c.*—He that by riotous living dissipates his father's property, and causes his father to become the prey of care and anxiety; and at the same time “chases away his mother,” either drives her away from him by rudeness and profligate conduct, or through extravagance reduces her to beggary, and compels her to leave her home, “is a son that causeth shame and bringeth reproach.” The Hebrew will admit Durell's version: “He that robbeth^a a father will drive away a mother; the son that causeth shame is also confounded.” Hodgson's is,

“He who plundereth his father, driveth out his mother;
He is a son causing shame, to disgrace shall he come.”

27. *Cease, my son, &c.*—The best interpretation of this verse seems to be that of the English translators and others, who consider it as an advice against attending to such

instruction as seduces or causes to err from wisdom: but some think it is an irony, (Michælis, Not. Uber.,) and others that חרל is the infinitive, *i. e.* "The ceasing to hear instruction, is to err from the words of knowledge."—See Schultens and Poli Synop.

28. *And the mouth of the wicked, &c.*—The wicked are as well satisfied with perjury and falsehood, as the palate is with delicate meats.

CHAPTER XX.

1. *Wine is a mocker, &c.*—Innumerable are the passages in poets, moralists, and divines describing the effects of wine; but, perhaps, its power is nowhere more happily delineated than in the second chapter of the first book of Esdras, (or Josephus, Ant. lib. xi. cap. 3,) to which I refer the reader, who cannot but be gratified by the perusal. By שכר, Bishop Lowth (on Isa. v. 11) thinks, is properly meant palm-wine or date-wine. Others suppose that it denotes all kinds of strong drink except wine; (Suicer, Thesaurus in σικερα;) but it appears to signify any strong and inebriating liquor. For further information I refer to Beveridge, Annot. in Can. Apostol. can. 3, and the Lexicons of Cocceius and Parkhurst.

2. *The king's wrath, &c.*—See ch. xix. 12, and note.

3. *will be meddling*—That is, will be engaged in contentions.

4. *The sluggard, &c.*—The sluggard will not plow his fields on account of the inclemency of the winter season. "They begin to plow," says Dr. Russel, "about the latter end of September, and sow their earliest wheat about the middle of October. The frosts are never severe enough to prevent their plowing all the winter."—(Quoted by Parkhurst, חרף.) חרף includes both autumn and winter.—(Cocceius, Michælis, Suppl. No. 856.) Sym. and Vulg. render it "propter frigus."

— *He shall seek, &c.*—He shall ask or seek for a crop in harvest, but shall find none. Some commentators understand it differently, namely, he shall be reduced to beg in the time of harvest, since he has no crops to reap: or he shall beg in harvest, but shall have nothing given him.

5. *Counsel, &c.*—Counsel in the mind of a wise man is deep and profound; but the prudent will endeavour to obtain it. The image is taken from the drawing of water out of a deep well.—Compare ch. xviii. 4, and note.

6. *Most men, &c.*—The Vulgate, Syriac, Targum, render it, “multi homines vocantur misericordes;” evidently reading חסד, instead of חסדר, and Houbigant, Durell, Reiske, &c. think the Vau should be omitted.

— *who can find*—“Interrogatio non prorsus negat reperiri posse, sed raritatem innuit.”—Michaelis, Not. Uber.

8. *A king that, &c.*—“To sit upon the throne,” in the Jewish phrase, signifies to reign, to exercise the “jura regalia.”—Deut. xvii. 18; 1 Kings, i. 20, 27, 46.

— *With his eyes*—That is, he sees into or examines all evil, punishes it, and, as far as possible, drives it away from his kingdom. The image appears to be taken from the winnowing of corn.—(Poli Synop.) “Tunc vere in solio judicii sedet rex, cum malos a conspectu suo profigat ac plectit, et de medio tollit.”—Mercer.

9. *Who can say, &c.*—The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament frequently declare, that there is no man who sins not, that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.—(See Gastrell’s Inst. p. 70.) Hence the necessity of an atonement.

10. *Diverse weights, &c.*—See ch. xi. 1, note. A repetition of the same noun often denotes diversity.—Robertson's Gram. p. 295; Schroeder, Inst. reg. 5; Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 16, ed. Dathe.

11. *Even a child, &c.*—This version is due to Schultens and Parkhurst, who properly distinguishes between *הכיר*, *to acknowledge*, and *נכר*, *to alienate*. This latter root occurs in IIithp. Gen. xlii. 7; 1 Kings, xiv. 5, 6, undoubtedly in the sense of dissembling; a sense adopted here by Geier, Gousset, Dathe, as well as the above-mentioned authors. A slight acquaintance with children will confirm the truth of the observation. The authorized version, "Even a child is known by his doings," is sanctioned by Vulgate, Syriac, Targ. Sym.

— *That in truth*—*וְכֵן כֵּן* *vere, omnino*.—Noldius, 5.

12. *The hearing ear, &c.*—Better, perhaps, according to LXX, Durell, Le Clerc, Dathe, "The ear heareth, and the eye seeth; but Jehovah," &c.—Compare Ps. xiv. 9.

13. *Love not sleep, &c.*—Descriptive of the advantages of active industry over indolence and sloth. *יָרַשׁ* *possedit, hereditavit*, in Niph. signifies to be possessed by another, to be stript of one's property, and made poor.—(Taylor's Concordance.) So it is used ch. xxiii. 21, xxx. 9; Gen. xlv. 11. Parkhurst derives *תורש* from *רש*.

14. *It is vile, &c.*—This will be confirmed by every man's experience. *רַע רַע*, a Hebrew superlative.

15. *There is gold, &c.*—A comparison, *i. e.* wise lips are more precious than gold and gems. The verse may be rendered, "Substance, gold, and a multitude of gems and precious jewels are the lips of knowledge."—(See Baynus and Dimock.) According to this translation, it is a metaphorical description of the excellence of the lips of knowledge.

16. *Take his garment, &c.*—In the translation of this verse, I have followed Durell, who remarks, that “Solomon repeatedly advises to beware of being surety for any body: but here he intimates, that it is not safe to admit the suretiship of a stranger, without taking a sufficient pawn or pledge as an additional security.” It was common among the Israelites to lend on pledge, which was sometimes grossly abused.—(Job, xxii. 6, xxiv. 3, 9.) It was permitted by Moses, who only made some regulations against its abuse.—Deut. xxiv. 10—13; Exod. xxii. 25; Michælis, Commentaries, Art. 150. Compare ch. vi. 1, and note.

— *where strangers*—Instead of the textual נכרים, the Keri, the parallel passage ch. xxvii. 13, and many MSS. have נכריה. Should this be thought sufficient evidence for its adoption, נכריה cannot mean *a strange woman, an harlot*, as, in that sense, it yields no consistent meaning, but must be put “neutraliter, pro negotio alieno et peregrino;” (see Geier, Michælis, Not. Uber.;) that is, “take a pledge of him who is surety in the affair of a stranger’s business.” נכריה is applied to things Exod. ii. 22, xviii. 3; Isa. xxviii. 21; Jer. ii. 21.

17. *Bread of deceit*—The sense is, Illicit pleasures terminate in pain and misery. “Bread of deceit” is that which is obtained by fraud and deceit; though it may mean fallacious bread, that which deceives, and yields no solid satisfaction.—(See Schultens, Doederlein, and Poli Synop.) In either case it denotes stolen and clandestine pleasures, as ch. ix. 17.

19. *A talebearer, &c.*—This line is nearly the same with ch. xi. 13.—See the note.

— *a babbler*—פתח primarily means *to open*, as it does in Syriac and Chaldee; hence שפתו פתח means, as Michælis

well explains it, (Suppl. No. 2093,) “*patulo labiis suis, seu, ut Vulgata vertit, qui dilatat labia sua, omnia ipsi concredita evulgans,*” *i. e.* a tattler, a babbler. So Dathe. The paralysis is a strong confirmation of this interpretation.

21. *An inheritance, &c.*]—As wealth obtained by honest means is not to be condemned, whether it be “gotten hastily,” by fortunate speculation, or by the slower, but more sure, profits of laudable industry, the sense must be, that a man may make such great haste to grow rich, as is inconsistent with honour and liberality, and even integrity of conduct. “An inheritance” acquired by such hasty means, to the neglect of those duties, the exercise of which is demanded by the good of society, “shall not be blessed,” it will not produce lasting comfort and prosperity. Such appears to be the particular explication of this aphorism; but its general design, as well as that of similar ones ch. xxi. 5, xxiii. 4, xxviii. 20, 22, is to censure and repress an inordinate love of money, than which no passion has a more pernicious effect upon the heart. No generous affection, no exalted sentiment can inhabit the bosom that is tenanted by the spirit of avarice. He who indulges this base passion may not, perhaps, be stained by any sins of gross delinquency; his principles may be, for the most part, sound, and his practice generally upright; but his principles will be paralyzed by selfishness, and his character will only exhibit a negative virtue, a mere exemption from vice; it will never be marked by those deeds of ardent benevolence, those acts of noble-minded generosity, which dignify the Christian and the man.

Instead of the textual reading, מבחלת, the Keri has מבהלת, which, in all probability, is the true reading, as it is confirmed by the parallel passage ch. xxviii. 22, by many MSS., and by all the ancient versions. Schultens (*Animadvers. inter Opera Minora*) would depart from the usual signification of בחל,

and, referring to the Arabic *بهل* *maledixit*, would render it, “*hæreditas est, cujus male dicitur in initio, et extremo ejus non bene dicetur;*” but this is unsupported by scriptural usage, and totally unnecessary. Capellus, (*Critica Sacra*, p. 224,) adopting the textual reading, explains it from the Arabic, “*hæreditas, quæ avaritia parta est initio, non benedicetur in fine;*” and this exposition is adopted by the German critics. This comes to the same point with the interpretation given above; nevertheless, I take *מבקהלת* to be the true reading.

24. *A man's goings, &c.*—By “goings” I understand the issue or event of a man’s proceedings, and by “way,” the way of life which he has adopted. The sense therefore is, The issue of men’s proceedings is in the disposal of heaven; who, then, can understand what will be the result of the line of life that he pursues? “*Sensus est, neminem scire, quis exitus sit futurus eorum, quæ adgreditur, a Deo enim eum pendere.*”—Le Clerc.

25. *The man is snared, &c.*—He has committed a trespass who has contracted the obligation of a vow before he has made proper inquiry. “For a man to vow, and to devour what he hath vowed, and not to pay it; and then to make inquiry concerning his vow, whether he hath vowed well or ill, or no? This is a snare: this should have been done before he made his vow, and not after.”—(Lightfoot’s Works, vol. ii. p. 1220.) *מוקש* is the participle *Pah.*; (Durell;) or as a noun, “it is a snare to the man who,” &c. The meaning of *לרע* is determined by Obadiah, 16, which proves that it signifies *to swallow*. *ע* *ל* means *a throat*, ch. xxiii. 2. If *עלע* may be referred to the same root, Job, xxxix. 30, it likewise determines the meaning to be that of *swallowing*, or *sucking up*; “gobble up,” Bishop Stock. This sense is applicable to Job, vi. 3: “my words are swallowed up,” *i. e.* falter and stick in the throat, “*vox faucibus hæret,*” as is

the case in excessive grief.—(But see Rosenmuller in loc.) So in the passage before us, “he who devoureth,” swalloweth down, “that which is holy,” *i. e.* he who rashly brings himself under a sacred obligation.—(See Taylor’s Concordance.) The root has this meaning in Syriac and Chaldee. The above-cited are all the texts where it occurs. Whoever wishes to see an useless display of Arabic learning, let him consult Schultens in loc. and on Job, vi. 3.

26. *A wise king, &c.*—A wise monarch separates the wicked from the good, and inflicts due punishment upon them, as the corn is separated from the straw, which is bruised in the threshing.—See verse 8, and note.

— *the wheel*—Though the punishment of the wheel prevailed in Greece, (Suicer, Thesaurus *τροχος*.) there is no evidence of its existence among the ancient Hebrews. The image is taken from one of the methods of threshing corn in the East, by a wain which had iron teeth, or edges like a saw.—Lowth on Isa. xxviii. 28; Burder’s Oriental Customs, No. 716.

27. *The spirit of man*—נשמה the spirit or soul of man. “The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, (נשמת חיים the living principle,) and man became a living soul.”—(Gen. ii. 7.) Thus “the vital spark of heavenly flame” is kindled by the Almighty. Others consider this as a description of conscience, which God has implanted in man, to investigate and examine the inmost recesses of the heart. As the apostle speaks, “what man knoweth the things of a man, (*i. e.* his concealed thoughts and designs, Macknight,) save the spirit of a man which is in him?”—1 Cor. ii. 11.

30. *The bruises, &c.*—In this version I have mainly followed Parkhurst, though others preceded him in the same

explication.—(See Poli Synop. and Schultens.) Geier, Dathe, Schulz, &c. expound the meaning to be, that the correction of vice is as painful as livid wounds and stripes inflicted on the body. This is a very true remark; but חררי בטן occurs ch. xviii. 8, xx. 27, xxvi. 22, in a metaphorical sense for the inner man, or the mind, and why should we give it a different signification here, when the one authorized by the preceding citations is quite suitable? According to this view, the meaning is, that chastisement is the only means of cleansing the wicked, and stripes, properly inflicted, purify the heart. חבירה *vibex*, *the mark of a wound*, as most Lexicons explain it; but it seems rather to mean *bruises*, Exod. xxi. 25; Ps. xxxviii. 5; Isa. i. 6, liii. 5.

— *a cleanser*]}—מַרְק is applied to the scouring or cleansing of vessels Levit. vi. 28, and to the furbishing of metals 2 Chron. iv. 16; Jer. xlvi. 4: hence, figuratively, to the cleansing of the mind.

CHAPTER XXI.

1. *The king's heart, &c.*]—The hearts of kings are in God's rule and governance, and he influences them whichever way he will, as easily as small streams are directed by the husbandman. The image is taken from the practice common among gardeners and husbandmen, of directing the course of brooks into small channels and rivulets, for the purpose of irrigating the soil. In the opinion of Grotius, this apophthegm refers to the extraordinary providence of God, an opinion which certainly accords with the sentiments of a Jew under the Theocracy; yet it is equally true of the ordinary providence of God, and by what authority shall we limit the maxims and expressions of the inspired writers, when they are true in the most extensive sense? פלגי מים properly

denote *waters* distributed into artificial canals, Ps. i. 3; Isa. xxxii. 2.—See Bishop Lowth's note on Isaiah, i. 30.

4. *And the lamp, &c.*—This is a very obscure verse; the sense of which, I think, is, that the loftiness, the pride, and splendour, and all the prosperity of the wicked, are sinful; for, their hearts being corrupt, they abuse the good gifts of God. נר is rendered by our translators and others “the plowing,” but all the ancient versions render it “a lamp,” which I have adopted, in obedience to their authority; understanding by “lamp” a state of prosperity, as ch. xiii. 9, where see note.—See other expositions in Schultens.

— *is sin*—חטא may, perhaps, mean *a fall, lapsatio*; (see ch. x. 16;) that is, the prosperity of the wicked is transitory, falls away, and ends in pain and vexation.—Schultens, Parkhurst, חטא, 2, Dathe.

5. *that is hasty*—*i. e.* every one that too eagerly longs to be rich to confine himself to the slow gains of industry, but uses vicious means of procuring wealth, (ch. xx. 21, xxviii. 20, 22,) opposed to “the diligent,” the honest, industrious man, in the former hemistich.

6. *The getting, &c.*—The procuring of treasures by deceit and falsehood is a vanity committed only by those who seek death, eventually, not intentionally, as Geier expresses it. There is not sufficient authority for altering the text, and reading נרר for נר, and במקשי for מבקשי; thus, “He that gets treasures by a lying tongue, pursuing vanity, falls into the snares of death;” though this emendation is supported by Houbigant, Dimock, Hodgson, Durell, Dathe.

7. *Destruction shall seize, &c.*—This verse admits very different translations: I have chosen that which appears to me the most probable, as it seems to be supported by LXX,

Syriac, Targ. Aq., and is adopted by Dathe, Cocceius, &c. ינורם I take to be put for ינוררם, from נר *traxit*.

8. *The way*, §c.]—This is the authorized version, plain, grammatical, and agreeable to the usual signification of the words. The propriety of the sentiment, likewise, will appear, if איש be taken for “a wicked man,” and its opposition to ור *the pure*, proves that it is to be so understood. It is asserted, that איש is never put for a bad man, and I have not found any example; therefore Capellus, Le Clerc, Durell, Hodgson, Reiske, read ור איש *a depraved man*, following the Vulgate, Syriac, and Targum in omitting the Vau: *i. e.* “The way of the depraved man is perverse.” One MS. of Kennicott omits the Vau, and one of De Rossi originally did; but this is too slight authority for its omission. Schultens, who is dissatisfied with the clearest expositions, unless his favourite Arabic is introduced, proposes to refer ור to the Arabic وزر *portavit onus*; hence, figuratively, *onustus fuit crimine*. According to this, the sense would be, He who is perverse in his way is oppressed with a heavy burthen; or is burthened with criminality. No such root occurs elsewhere in Hebrew, whereas the meaning of ור is indubitable; it is, therefore, strange that this far-fetched criticism should be approved by Doederlein, Dathe, Schulz, Simonis, Parkhurst, (in וור,) and Dindorf (in יור.)

9. *a common house*]—Literally, as in English margin, “a house of society.” It was usual with the Eastern people for a number of families to live together in one house, (Harmer’s *Observations*, vol. i. p. 278; Parkhurst, חבר,) and Solomon asserts, that it is better to live in solitude, in a small arbour on the roof of the house, than in large apartments in a common house, with a brawling woman, who will excite continual strife and contention.—See ch. xix. 13, and note.

11. *When a scorner, &c.*—This verse is similar to ch. xix. 25, *i.e.* when a scorner is punished the simple man, *i.e.* the scorner himself, is made wise.

12. *The Just One, &c.*—“*Locus perobscurus,*” says Mercer. It becomes very perspicuous, if צַדִּיק be considered as referring to God, who is often called צַדִּיק in the Old, and *δικαιος* in the New Testament. One objection, however, must not be concealed, that the word, in every other place of the Proverbs, denotes a righteous person. If this should appear to others sufficient to overturn the proposed exposition, though it does not to myself, I would adopt, next to it, that of Le Clerc, &c.: “Cum instituit innocens domum nocentis, pervertit nocentes, ita ut in malum *incidant*.” *i.e.* “Hoc omnino velle videtur Salomon: eum qui revocet ad bonos mores familiam mali viri, a quo non auditur; eam deteriorem reddere, ita ut in malum *incidat*.”

14. *pacifieth*—כַּפֵּה occurs nowhere else, but the context sufficiently establishes its meaning: besides, all the ancient versions give it the sense of *averting* or *extinguishing*, while the Arabic سَفَا means *avertit*, and in Syriac and Chaldee the root means nearly the same.

16. *shall remain*—“Hoc de constanti mansione intelligendum est potius, quam de placida mortis quiete, quæ pie defunctis convenit, Isa. lvii. 2; Job, iii. 17; Dan. xii. 13.”—Michælis, Not. Uber.

17. *Hc that loveth, &c.*—Wine and oil constituted an essential part of feasts; hence they are put for all those delicacies in which they indulge who are addicted to a voluptuous kind of life. The general sense is, that luxury and extravagance lead to poverty. “Quid autem? Annon fas est lætari, ridere, epulum agere? Est sane: sed hæc amare, illis animum adjicere, eis quotidie incumbere, in eis multum temporis ponere, fas esse pernego.”—Cartwright.

18. *The wicked, &c.*—God has so providentially ordered it, that, by a just retribution, the mischief which the wicked design against the righteous, often falls upon their own head; and in public calamities the just frequently escape when the wicked perish.

— *is cut off*—Literally, “shall be a ransom;” but as the wicked cannot, in the proper sense of the word, be a ransom for the righteous, the meaning must be, that the wicked come into the situation which they intended for the good, and may be said to be a ransom for the good, as suffering in their stead.

— *instead of*—ל is here taken for *vice, loco, in the stead of*, (Noldius, 41,) as is evident from its corresponding with תחת in the second hemistich. So Vulgate, Syriac, Targum.

19. *woman*—i. e. a wife, and so verse 9th.

20. *Desirable treasure, &c.*—Plenty and abundance attend the wise, in consequence of their industry and good conduct; but fools dissipate their substance through indolence and imprudence. נחמד, participle passive, which answers to the Latin participial adjectives in *bilis*, i. e. *desiderabilis*; so מהלל *laudabilis*, Ps. xviii. 4; נפלאה *mirabile*, Ps. xl. 6; נבוז *contemtibilis*; נבאש *abominabilis*.—Storrii Observat. in Syntax et Anal. p. 135; Rosenmuller in Ps. xlvi. 2.

22. *A wise man, &c.*—The value of wisdom is here demonstrated by its efficacy in the capture of strong forts and cities; in Eccles. ix. 14, et seq. by its power in preserving them when assaulted. The sum is, that wisdom is preferable to strength.

— *in which they confide*—The ה in מבטחה is the pronominal affix, referring to עיר, literally, “the strength of its confidence,” i. e. the strength of the city in which the mighty confide; ἐφ’ ὃ ἐπιποιθισαυ, LXX. Schultens says, ה is “He feminine,” not the affix, because it wants the Mappik; but

this is sometimes the case, (Altingii Fundam. Punct. p. 197,) and we are now emancipated from a state of bondage to the Masoretic points.

24. *and haughty*] יהיר only occurs here and Hab. ii. 5, neither of which places absolutely determine its meaning, though the sense of pride is applicable to both. In Chaldee, however, it means *superbus*; (Buxt. Lex. Talm.;) and if it be derived from הרה *to be big with child*, hence הר *a mountain*, it may mean, “looking big, haughty, proud.”—(Parkhurst.) In this sense it is rendered by LXX, Vulgate, and Targum, in both places. It is in vain to appeal to the Arabic, as there are several roots to which it may be referred: for instance, *أ* conturbavit, attonitum fecit; *يهر*, in conjugation 10, *dementatus est*; (Michaelis, Supplem. No. 970;) *هار* corrui. These, indeed, are cognate roots, and in some degree allied in signification; yet it must be evident, that nothing can, with certainty, be deduced from them; though Schultens pleads with some plausibility in favour of the sense above contended for, as deducible from the Arabic.

26. *He coveteth, &c.*]—That is, “the slothful man” mentioned in the preceding verse. But some understand תאווה as the abstract for the concrete, and render it “avarus:” “The covetous man desireth all the day long; but,” &c. *αρετης επιθυμια*, LXX.

28. *A false witness, &c.*]—The false witness shall be punished; but the witness who only speaks what he has heard, neither adding thereto nor diminishing aught from it, shall speak to victory, (לנצח,) that is, convincingly: “loquetur victoriam,” Vulgate; *ως νικος πορευσεται*, Aq. Sym. Theod., probably in the same sense. For this luminous explication I am indebted to Bate and Parkhurst. But Schultens, who is followed by Simonis, Michaelis, Schulz, Taylor, maintains

that the primitive meaning of נָצַח is *purus, sincerus fuit*, like the Arabic نَصَح. According to this, the sense would be, "He who hath heard speaks according to truth," or sincerely, without falsehood or disguise. To this I object, 1st. That it is not supported by biblical usage. 2dly. Nor by the versions. 3dly. As to the authority of the dialects, נָצַח in Syriac and Chaldee means *victory*, and though in Arabic it has the sense of *purus fuit*, it has likewise the sense of *monuit, monitum dedit*.—(See Golius.) The evidence, therefore, is clearly in favour of the received signification.

29. *hardeneth his face*—Compare ch. vii. 13.

31. *But safety*—Some render הַחֲשׂוֹתָ "victory," as it sometimes signifies. Either way translated the sentiment is pious and excellent.

CHAPTER XXII.

1. *A good name*—טוֹב is put for a good name, as it is rendered in the Vulgate, LXX, and Targum.—See ch. xviii. 22, note.

— *And favour*—Namely, the kindness and affection of friends and neighbours.

2. *The rich and poor, &c.*—The rich and poor necessarily live together, and have mutual need of each other; which circumstance, as well as their being both of them the creatures of God, should induce them to exercise mutual kindness and benevolence. This seems to be the sense of this passage, and likewise of ch. xxix. 13. A very pertinent illustration may be seen in *Hermas*, lib. iii. Similitudo. 2. See also *Clemens Rom. Ep.* § 27.

3. *and avoids it*—Literally, "hides himself," *i. e.* the prudent see the impending evil, and avoid it, or hide themselves

from it; but the simple, being blind to it, pass on, and consequently are punished. The same sentiment, with some small verbal variations, occurs ch. xxvii. 12.

4. *The reward*—אָפּ, literally, “the end,” *i. e.* the reward, as the word signifies Ps. xix. 12, xl. 16. So τέλος is sometimes used.—Schleusner in voc. See Simonis, Lex. Heb. ed. Eichhorn.

5. *Thorns, &c.*—Thorns and snares are metaphorical expressions for pains, and troubles, and afflictions, which “he that keepeth his soul,” *i. e.* the righteous, shall escape.

6. *Train up, &c.*—I am unwilling to alter the received version of a passage so well known, and so frequently quoted by moralists and divines; yet not oftener cited than its importance requires, nor so much regarded as its valuable admonition deserves. But it may be more literally rendered,

“Initiate a child according to his way;

And when he is old he will not depart from it.”

על פֿי *secundum, according to.*—(Noldius, 1.) דרכו *his way*, either the manner of life he is destined to lead, or the manner of life he ought to lead. According to the first, the meaning will be, Train a child up according to the manner of life he is designed to lead; give him an education suitable to his rank and avocation in life.—(See Le Clerc.) According to the second, Initiate him in the way wherein he ought to go, in the way of wisdom and religion. Taylor, in his Concordance, understands על פֿי “at the mouth or entrance of his way,” *i. e.* begin to train him in early life. So Schultens.

8. *He that soweth, &c.*—He that is devoted to vice shall suffer merited punishment; and the anger which he unjustly and tyrannically exercises towards others shall cease; he shall either have no opportunity of venting it, or it shall be attended

with no harm.—Compare Hosea, viii. 7; Joel, iii. 13; Job, iv. 8 (where see Schultens and Good.)

— *And the rod*—The latter hemistich appearing not to correspond with the former, Houbigant, Doederlein, and Dathe would read, with the LXX, עֲבֵרְתוּ, instead of עֲבֵרְתוּ, *i. e.* “*baculus consummabit laborem*,” but this emendation is not authorized by MSS., and the Vulgate, Syriac, Targum, follow the textual reading, which affords a very apposite meaning. “Rod” often denotes punishment or correction: (Job, ix. 34, xxi. 9; Isaiah, ix. 4; 1 Cor. iv. 21:) “the rod of his anger,” therefore, means the vengeance which he, in his anger, tyrannically inflicts.

— *shall be broken*—Literally, “shall fail or consume away,” but, in order to preserve the propriety of the metaphor, I have ventured to translate it “shall be broken.” Hodgson renders it, “And the sceptre of his tyranny shall be broken.”

9. *He that hath a bountiful eye*—That is, the liberal, humane, and charitable man; ο ελεων πτωχον, LXX; “qui pronus est ad misericordiam.” As the eye is the most expressive of all the features, and seldom fails to indicate the passions of the heart, it is sometimes figuratively used for the passions and affections themselves: thus, “an evil eye” denotes envy and malignity ch. xxiii. 6, xxviii. 22; Deut. xv. 9, xxiii. 54, 56.—Compare Matt. xx. 15; Mark, vii. 22. See Parkhurst’s Greek Lex. and Suiceri Thesaurus in οφθαλμος.

11. *He that loveth, &c.*—The conversation of him who loves purity of heart will be agreeable and virtuous; and he will be esteemed by the ruling powers. Jarchi refers it to the King of kings, “the blessed God loves and embraces him:” and as this is an undeniable truth, it is most likely included

in the maxim. In such cases as the present, the most comprehensive sense is to be preferred.

12. *the wise*—Literally, “knowledge,” but from the antithesis we may infer, that the abstract is put for the concrete, and that it means those who have knowledge, the wise, as Eben Ezra understands it.

— *the affairs*—דברי is surely better rendered “affairs” (or “matters,” English margin) than “words,” as it is not easy to define in what way God overthroweth the words of the transgressors, but he certainly overthrows their affairs; however for a while they may flourish, in the end he will punish them: “evertit res perfidi,” Le Clerc.

13. *The slothful man, &c.*—This appears to be the sluggard’s excuse for his indolence. He endeavours to extenuate his slothfulness and want of exertion by alleging dangers and difficulties where none exist, as the streets of cities are not the haunts of wild beasts. A strong and energetic picture! It may, however, signify, or rather include, the sluggard’s timidity and fear of imaginary dangers.—Compare ch. xxvi. 13. See Bochart, Hieroz. par. 1, lib. iii. cap. 2.

14. *He that is abhorred, &c.*—In consequence of their evil practices and depraved dispositions, God, as a judicial punishment, permits those who have offended him to fall victims to harlot wiles. Or “the abhorred of Jehovah” may be a figurative expression for a sinner. A man of base inclinations and conduct will fall into the pit laid for him by the wanton. “I find,” says the Preacher, “more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.”—Eccles. vii. 26.

16. *to magnify himself*—Literally, “to increase or magnify to himself;” not, as I apprehend, restricted to the increase of

wealth, but including whatever tends to make a man great. He who for this object oppresses the poor, and he who gives to the rich, and courts their favour by bribes, shall come to want; because the former will meet with a just retribution at the hands of Providence, and the latter must give all that he possesses to gratify the avarice of the rich.—See other interpretations in Schultens, &c.

17. *Incline thine ear, &c.*—It is observable, as the commentators remark, that Solomon now changes his manner of speaking. From the tenth chapter to this verse he has given generally detached and unconnected aphorisms and sententious observations; but from hence to chapter xxv. he uses the admonitory style, and gives a variety of admirable moral precepts, not unfrequently connected together through several verses. It will be seen, that these observations must be understood with some limitations.

18. *be ready*—Literally, “they shall be fitted or made ready together;” *i. e.* the words of the wise and my instructions (verse 17) shall be always ready on thy lips, to speak of them, and to teach them to others.

19. *even thee*—The repetition of the pronoun is very emphatic. Similar repetitions occur ch. xxiii. 15; Gen. xxvii. 34; 1 Kings, xxi. 19; Ps. ix. 7.—Buxtorf, Thesaurus, lib. ii. cap. 8, p. 413.

20. *excellent things*—שְׁלֹשׁ (שְׁלֹשׁ according to many MSS. the London Polyglott, and the Keri in Frey’s reprint of Vander Hooght’s Bible) is of very uncertain interpretation. Some render it “nudius tertius,” *i. e.* have I not before taught thee? as if compounded of שְׁלֹשׁ יום; (Simonis, Lex. ;) others render it “tripliciter,” (LXX, Vulgate,) and explain it of the three books of Solomon, (see Grotius,) or of the Law,

the Prophets, and the Hagiographa, the three divisions of the Old Testament, as the Rabbins expound it. I am most inclined to agree with those who explain it by “tripliciter:” at the same time, I understand it as a certain number put for an uncertain, *i. e.* have I not frequently written, &c.

21. *the certainty*—נשׁפ only occurs here and Ps. lx. 6. Hebrew, where, however, the LXX, Syriac, Vulgate, Sym. probably read נשׁפ, at least they understood it in the sense of *bow, arcus*. The Vulgate has here “firmitatem,” but nothing certain can be collected from the other versions. In Chaldee it signifies *veritas, rectitudo*, and so does the Arabic قسٓط, though the Arabic, by one of those contrarieties to be found in all languages, denotes *a justo deflexit, iniquus fuit*. The traditionary sense, therefore, of *verity, certainty*, is not without other support.

— *to those that send to thee*—That is, for the purpose of instruction; “qui te consulunt,” Dathe; so LXX. Others, “to those that send thee,” Vulg. Targ. “Ut veracia dicta referas iis qui tibi negotium mandaverint.”—Castalio.

22. *in the gate*—That is, in judgment. It is well known, that the gates were anciently the places where the courts of judicature were held; they were likewise places of public concourse, and places where fairs or markets were held.—See Parkhurst, שער; Harmer, vol. iv. p. 455, et seq. whose observations are well worth reading; Fleury’s *Manners of the Ancient Israelites*, p. 178, et seq. ed. Clarke, London, 1809.

23. *For Jehovah, &c.*—God, as the righteous judge, will defend them, and avenge their wrongs, by punishing their oppressors. This is to be referred to the extraordinary providence which God exercised over the people of Israel.

— *And spoil*—קבע only occurs here and Mal. iii. 8, 9, where it seems to mean *spoiling* or *defrauding*. Though Schultens, and, after him, Michælis, Simonis, and Schulz, appeal to the Arabic قَبَعَ *tegere*, spec. *caput*, it is difficult to discover any analogy between the two words. In Chaldee it means *spoliare*, and the noun קבע *spoliator*, *prædo*.—(Buxtorf, *Lex. Talm. et Rab.*) In this sense it is rendered by Aq. Sym. and Syriac in Malachi; but in Proverbs the ancient versions partly support the sense of *fixit*, *infixit*, which sense the root has in the Syriac, Chaldee, and Samaritan dialects. The external evidence, however, preponderates, and the internal evidence is clearly in favour of the traditionary sense.

25. *And get a snare, &c.*—Lest, by imitating him, thou shouldst fall into great difficulty and danger; for anger is the cause of many evils.

26. *Be not thou, &c.*—See ch. vi. 1, note. Literally, “be not thou among,” *i. e.* be not one of them. נשא משאח from נשא; but נשא and נשה are sometimes used promiscuously.—Simonis, *Lex. Heb.*

27. *Lest, &c.*—This version agrees with LXX, Syriac, Targum, Dathe. The construction is involved, but the meaning is, Be cautious of becoming surety, for “if thou have nothing to pay with,” and shouldst be called upon for the security given, the creditor will seize upon thy effects, and “why should thy bed be taken from under thee?” Why shouldst thou put thyself into such a situation as to hazard the loss of thy whole property? I have expressed this sense in the version: E. T. and Vulgate exhibit a meaning contrary to what was intended.—See ch. xx. 16, note.

28. *Remove not, &c.*—So ch. xxiii. 10, agreeable to the law Deut. xix. 14, xxvii. 17. The general sense of this precept is, that a man should be content with his paternal estate, and

not endeavour to increase it by unjust means. Calmet's explanation is, "Continue faithfully attached to the ancient customs of your country; follow the religion of your ancestors; respect their manners, their counsels, their establishments; incline not to innovation, which is always dangerous, especially in matters of religion."—Quoted in Dodd's Bible.

29. *He shall stand, &c.*—“To stand before” is a Scripture phrase, signifying to serve or minister, at the same time often implying something honourable in it.—Deut. x. 8; 1 Sam. xvi. 21; 1 Kings, i. 2, xvii. 1, xviii. 15, x. 8; 2 Chron. xviii. 18; Jer. xv. 19; Dan. i. 5; Luke, i. 19.

— *mean men*—חשבים, being opposed to kings, necessarily denotes mean and obscure persons: “ignobiles,” Vulgate.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1. *When thou sittest*—The ancient manner of eating was in a sitting posture, as we do; but when soft and effeminate luxury began to prevail, they exchanged their seats for couches, *κλιναι*, and took their food in a recumbent posture.—Calmet, Dict. art. *eating*; Potter's Antiq. lib. iv. cap. 20; Adam's Roman Antiq. p. 435.

— *what is before thee*—אשר אֵת may refer to “ruler,” in the former hemistich, namely, Consider well what a powerful man is before thee, and be circumspect in thy behaviour: but the ancient versions expound it neutrally, *i. e.* Diligently consider what things are placed before thee, and indulge not intemperately, but with moderation. This is favoured by the two following verses; both senses, however, may be included. חָבֵן בִּי.—Altingii Fundam. Punct. p. 316.

2. *And put a knife, &c.*—So destructive is intemperance, that a man might as well put an end to his existence at once,

as indulge immoderately in the luxuries of the table. שִׁבִּין is ἀπαξ λεγ. It is rendered by words equivalent to “knife” by Syr. Targ. Vulg. Aq. Theod.; and so it means in Syriac, Chaldee, and Arabic. This is strong testimony; but Taylor (Concord. in voc.) thinks that it comes from סָכַן, and “signifieth a person that stinteth the consumption of provisions: thus, *And set a stinter over thy throat*, one that shall look after you, and appoint what and how much you are to eat, *if thou art a man given to appetite*, and canst not govern thyself.” Parkhurst and Hodgson explain it by *check*, *stop*, or *restraint*; the former of whom objects to the rendering it “knife,” because it is taking the sense from the Chaldee סָכַן, and “the Jews,” says he, “knew nothing of that language till long after the time of Solomon.” This observation is not made with his wonted accuracy. Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac were originally one and the same language, or at least have descended from one primæval language; they still retain a considerable affinity; and, had they been even totally different dialects, there must have been sufficient intercourse for the importation of a few terms, since “Solomon reigned over all kingdoms, from the river (*i. e.* the Euphrates) unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.”—1 Kings, iv. 21. No good reason, therefore, appears for rejecting the sense of the word which it is commonly supposed to bear.

3. *Be not desirous, &c.*—In partaking of splendid banquets prudence is to be used, lest something may occur that will offend the ruler, and so prove injurious to the guest: or temperance is to be exercised, otherwise these dainties will be destructive to health.

4. *this thy prudence*—Do not make riches the sole object of thy labours; cease from this anxiety, which the world calls

prudence. It is an admonition against an avaricious disposition, not against economy, and a due attention to pecuniary matters. "Thy prudence," ironically, what the world calls prudence, Dathe; but Le Clerc supplies לֵא from the first line, and renders it, "Labour not to be rich, neither cease to act prudently."

5. *a transient thing*].—So Durell; but וְאֵינְךָ may mean, which thou canst not possess, canst not lay hold on; "quod non consequeris," Dathe.

7. *For us, &c.*].—This is a reason for the prohibition in the preceding verse, namely, Desire not the luxuries of an envious man; for as he is vile in his heart, so is his conduct base and deceitful; he says, "eat and drink," when he wishes the invitation to be refused. There is an amazing diversity in the interpretation of שָׂעָר: I follow Taylor and Durell in translating it "vile," a sense which the root undoubtedly has Jer. v. 30, xviii. 13; Hos. vi. 10; Jer. xxix. 17.

8. *The morsel, &c.*].—Thou shalt loathe and detest the morsel of the base hypocrite which thou hast eaten, and wilt rescind the compliments thou hast paid to so unworthy a man.

— *rescind*].—Literally, "thou shalt destroy," *i. e.* recall, call back, or rescind, thou wilt regret them. "Alterum colon sic accipiendum autumo, *et rescindes verba tua amœnissima*; pigebit te, quod ullo verborum honore, ulla gratiarum actione, spurcissimum mortalem sis prosecutus."—Schultens.

11. *For their Avenger*].—That is, God; (compare ch. xxii. 22, 23;) an allusion to the office of the Goel. The Orientals are exceedingly revengeful. Among the Jews the Goel, next of kin to the person murdered, was bound, according to an ancient custom, to avenge the blood of his relation, and to put the murderer to death, wherever he might meet with

him, except in consecrated places. For a further account of the Goel I refer to Parkhurst and Dindorf in לֹמֵךְ; Bauer, Crit. Sac. vol. ii. p. 271; Michaelis, Commentaries, Art. 131.

13. *When thou beatest him*—By proper correction thou wilt prevent him from committing those crimes for which he will deserve death. Though this is, probably, meant of temporal punishments only, it is equally true in regard to those that are eternal. This interpretation is confirmed by the next verse.

14. *Thou shalt beat him*—Perhaps better in the imperative, “Beat him with the rod.”—Le Clerc, Durell, Hodgson.

15. *even mine*—Literally, “even I.” The pronoun is pleonastic.—See ch. xxii. 19.

16. *my reins*—In the Scriptures various affections are attributed to the reins or kidneys.—Cocc. and Parkhurst, Lex.; Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 850.

17. *envy*—It has been remarked, that נָפַח, construed with הָ, is to be understood in a good sense, with אֵל, in a bad one, for hating on account of another's excellence, happiness, or prosperity; but that this is not strictly correct will appear from examining ch. iii. 31, xxiv. 1, 19; Ps. xxxvii. 1, lxxiii. 3.—(See Rosenmuller on Ps. xxxvii. 1.) The word “envy” is often used in Scripture not merely for to hate, to be indignant at another for his happiness or possessions, but, at the same time, to have an admiration of the objects which are the cause of envy, and a desire of possessing them. I have retained the word “envy” in the version, though, perhaps, it would be better to substitute “to be zealous of, to affect, to emulate.” Some render the verse, “Let not thine heart affect, or be zealous of sinners; but always the fear of Jehovah.”

So Syriac, Durell, Le Clerc, Taylor, Dathe, Schultens, and it is, perhaps, the preferable version.

18. *a reward*—There is a reward for continuing in the fear of God, and the expectation of it shall not be disappointed. *אחרית* is rendered “reward” ch. xxiv. 14, a good comment on this place. Such, also, is its meaning ch. xxiv. 20, and, according to many, Ps. xxxvii. 37. The reward spoken of is temporal; but see Peters’ Critical Dissertation on Job, p. 293.

20. *among those who, &c.*—*זולל* means *a glutton* verse 21; Deut. xxi. 20, and the root means *to be lavish* or *prodigal*; hence *זולל בשר* “lavish of flesh,” *i. e.* great eaters, gluttons. *למו* “upon themselves,” but some render it “among themselves,” and the Hebrew will bear it: *εν αυτοις*, Theodotion.

21. *And drowsiness*—The abstract for the concrete, the drowsy man, the sluggard; *πασπνωδης*, LXX.—See Michælis, Not. Uber.

22. *that begat thee*—*זה* is here a pronominal relative. —Noldius, 11.

23. *Buy truth, &c.*—That is, consider these as the most valuable of all treasures, and be not tempted to part with them at any price. The metaphor is drawn from mercantile transactions. This verse may be rendered, with Vulgate, Syriac, Targum, and one Hexaplar version, “Buy truth, and sell not wisdom, and instruction, and understanding;” thus forming a single line, but the accentuation makes two lines, or hemistiches.

24. *And he that, &c.*—The Keri and many MSS. omit the Vau in *וישמו*, and prefix it to the first word in this hemistich, which is, therefore, most likely the true reading.

25. *shall be glad*—That is, if thou be a wise child. As this is an inference from the foregoing verse, “therefore” is properly supplied.

26. *rejoice*—Our translators have followed the Keri תצורנה *observe*, instead of the Cethib תרצנה *rejoice*. Either forms a good sense, and the evidence for each is pretty nearly equal.

27. *a narrow pit*—So Vulgate, Syriac, Targum, English Translation, &c.; but as צרה means *distress, trouble*, it may be rendered, “a well of distress,” corresponding with “deep pit” in the former hemistich.—Durell. Compare ch. xxii. 14.

28. *as a robber*—The root חתף only occurs here and Job, ix. 12. Schultens, appealing to the Arabic حَتَفَ, renders it “harpago.” Dathe, referring to the same Arabic word, renders it “instar feræ rabidæ.” Michælis, taking the sense from the same Arabic word, renders it “mors.” Surely those critics who send us to the Arabic for illustration of this noun trifle most egregiously. The meaning, however, may be determined by the Hebraic usage. In Job, ix. 12, חתף can mean nothing else than *taking away, rapiens*, and hence, as a noun, *one that takes away, a robber*; “quasi latro,” Vulgate. As letters of the same organ are easily changed, this word is, probably, allied to חטף, which denotes *to seize, rapere*, not only in Hebrew, but in Syriac, Chaldee, and Arabic.

29. *Who hath woe?*—This verse, consisting of six interrogatories, may be divided into two or three hemistiches. “Woe,” און, so the ancient versions, but Schultens and Dathe consider it as a noun, from און *desideravit*, and render it “cuinam libido.”

— *Who hath concupiscence?*]—The *απαξ* *λεν*. *אבוי* I derive, with Schultens and Dathe, from *אבח* *voluit, concupivit*, and render it “concupiscence,” which is commonly the effect of wine. Michælis (Suppl. No. 7) renders it “nausea, vomitus,” from the Arabic *أبي*. Many render it “poverty,” as if allied to *אבין*; so Eben Ezra derives it.

— *who hath anxiety?*]—*שיח* I take to mean the care and anxiety of a mind absorbed in profound thought; very applicable to the anxious thoughts which arise in the mind of the drunkard, upon reflecting on the follies he commits in his intemperance and madness. Others render it very differently.

— *Who hath redness of the eyes?*]—*חכללות* evidently means some disease or bad effect produced in the eyes by intoxication; and their being red or bloodshot is commonly the consequence of hard drinking. This word only occurs elsewhere Gen. xlix. 12.—See Michælis, Suppl. No. 724.

30. *mixed wine*]—The strongest and most inebriating wine.—See ch. ix. 2, note.

31. *when it sparkles*]—Literally, “when it giveth its eye in the cup.” By *עץ* some understand “colour,” as it signifies Lev. xiii. 35; Numb. xi. 7; Ezek. i. 4, &c.; but as this would be merely a repetition of the preceding clause, it probably means the brightness and transparency essential to good wine, which may be called its appearance or aspect, but better expressed as in the version.

— *goeth down*]—Descriptive of the gout and relish with which wine of the finest quality goes down the throat, *i. e.* is drank. See many learned and entertaining remarks on the subject of wine in Gataker, *Adversaria*, cap. 5.

33. *Thine eyes will gaze*]—Excess in wine generally leads to sins of lewdness, and certainly to the uttering foolish and

perverse things. ראה here means to look upon with delight, with amorous desire, well rendered by the word "gaze."

34. *Yea, thou wilt, &c.*—Thou wilt be surrounded with danger, like the mariner who reposes in a frail bark floating on the ocean; yet thou wilt be as insensible to thy perilous situation as the seaboy is who sleeps soundly at the mast-head. This recalls to mind the beautiful lines of Shakspeare:

" Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
Seal up the shipboy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude imperious surge," &c.

35. *Thou shalt say, &c.*—This is the drunkard's apology for his darling indulgence, when he awakes in the morning from his debauch. Lulled into a pleasing insensibility by wine, he exclaims, I felt not the ill usage I received. When shall I awake from my insensibility? I am asked. But since the effects of wine are so enchanting, why should I? I will therefore seek it yet again.—(See Isa. lvi. 12, xxii. 13.) The ancient versions supply "thou shalt say," as in the authorized translation.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1. *Envy not, &c.*—See ch. xxiii. 17, note; *i. e.* emulate not, &c.

3. *an house*—That is, a family, *res domesticæ*.

5. *A wise man, &c.*—Some render this verse, "The wise is more excellent than the powerful; and the man of understanding than the mighty in strength." So Syriac, Targum, LXX. This version is admissible; but as a noun with כ prefixed is often used for an adjective, (see ch. viii. 8, note,) כח, I think, means "strong," literally, "in strength." According to this view the received version is correct.

7. *too high*—מָרָם, with an epenthetic א, for מָרָם.—
 Altingii Fundam. Punct. p. 443; Capelli Arcanum Punct.
 lib. i. cap. 18, § 11.

— *in the gate*—Either in the place of judgment, or of
 public resort.

8. *shall be called*—*i. e.* shall be so regarded by mankind.

9. *An evil thought*—Literally, “the device of folly,” answering to what are called in the New Testament *διαλογισμοὶ πονηροὶ*, “evil thoughts.”—(Matt. xv. 19; Mark, vii. 21; James, ii. 4.) Our blessed Lord’s observation is the best comment on this passage. Evil thoughts are sinful; they are the forerunners of evil practices, and they must be placed under control, or the conduct will not be virtuous and upright. “He, therefore, that would govern his actions by the laws of virtue, must regulate his thoughts by those of reason; he must keep guilt from the recesses of his heart, and remember that the pleasures of fancy, and the emotions of desire, are more dangerous, as they are more hidden, since they escape the awe of observation, and operate equally in every situation, without the concurrence of external opportunities.”—(Rambler, No. 8.) Dr. Paley has admirably treated this subject in his *Evidences*, part 2, ch. 2.

10. *Dost thou faint, &c.*—An exhortation to bear misfortunes with fortitude and equanimity, very much resembling the precept, “Ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito.” The initial π is interrogative. The latter hemistich is literally, “Let adversity be thy strength,” *i. e.* let it give thee strength: “*Ipsa calamitas animum tibi addat*,” Dathe.—See Schultens.

11, 12. *Deliver, &c.*—Verses 11 and 12 are intimately connected together, containing an exhortation to assist the

innocent, and to succour the distressed. They may be thus paraphrased: "Deliver those who are hurried away unto death," unto unjust punishment, "and those that are about to be slain," by an unjust sentence. "If thou forbear," if thou do it not, "Although thou say, Behold, we knew not this man," whatever excuses thou mayst advance, "Will not he that weigheth the heart consider it? And will not he that keepeth thy soul know it? And will he not render to every man according to his works?" Most assuredly he will, and will punish thee for thy cruelty.—See Schultens.

— *If thou forbear*— \square sometimes has the sense of *ne* (*prohibentis*) Noldius, 7: and so it is rendered by LXX, Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic; but it yields a good sense rendered *if*, as in the version.

— *this man*— η may be put neutrally for "this thing," *i. e.* "we knew it not," E. T., or for "this man," *i. e.* whether he suffered justly or unjustly.—Michælis, Not. Ueber.

13 and 14. *My son, &c.*—These two verses appear to be a comparison: as honey is sweet to the taste, and eaten with pleasure, so let the acquisition of wisdom be agreeable. Caph, the particle of comparison, is omitted, as in many other instances.—(Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 441.) It would be absurd, taken literally for a command to eat honey; the imperative אכל must, therefore, be understood *permissive*, (Glass, p. 287,) *i. e.* as thou mayst eat, or as thou eatest.—See Dathe and Le Clerc.

16. *For the just man, &c.*—Injure not a righteous man, for though he frequently falls into distress, yet, by the superintending care of Providence, "he riseth up again," is delivered from his distress, while the wicked are overwhelmed by their misfortunes. That this is the meaning is plain from the preceding and following verses: yet some expound it by the just

man often relapsing into sin, and recovering from it: nay, it has even been adduced to prove the doctrine of the Final Perseverance of the Elect. But נפל is never used for falling into sin, but into distress and affliction; as, ch. xi. 5, 14, xiii. 17, xvii. 20, xxvi. 27, xxviii. 10, 14, 18.—See Le Clerc, Poli Synop., and particularly Noldius, Annot. 1870, ad Concord.

17. *when he stumbleth*—בכשלו may mean, when he stumbleth into sin, *i. e.* Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth into misfortunes, nor when he is seduced into sin. But it seems better to understand it as equivalent to יכשלו ברעה in verse 16; *i. e.* when he is overwhelmed with evil or calamity.

18. *And he turn away, &c.*—This is a difficult clause. ממו seems naturally to refer to Jehovah. Under the extraordinary providence exercised over the Jewish people, calamities were considered as the just inflictions of God's wrath, and prosperity the evidence of his favour; hence, by a metonymy of the cause for the effect, calamities are sometimes called, in Scripture, “the wrath of God.”—(Ps. lxxix. 6; Mich. vii. 9; Rom. ii. 5, iii. 5; Eph. v. 6. See Schleusner, *οργη*.) “His wrath” may, then, mean the misfortunes which God, in his just displeasure, suffers to befall mankind. עלך *to thee*, must be understood, *viz.* Lest Jehovah be displeased, and turn the calamities of thine enemy upon thee, in just punishment of thy cruelty. So Walther, Schultens, Le Clerc, Michaëlis, Hodgson, Dathe. ממו may, however, refer to “enemy,” verse 17, *viz.* Rejoice not at his calamities, which will only irritate him the more, and serve to perpetuate his enmity, but try to turn away his anger, and to be reconciled to him. According to this the translation should be, “*But endeavour to avert his wrath from him.*” The standard version, “and he turn away his wrath from him,” though it

agrees with the ancient versions, cannot be right, as it implies, that we have the power to prevent the wrath of God, and that we ought not to do it.

19. *Emulate not*—חַתְּחַר, I think, here means *to burn with zeal, to emulate*, corresponding with קָנָה in the second hemistich.—(See ch. xxiii. 17, note.) But it may mean, Be not indignant at evil men, though they prosper; leave them to their Judge, who will punish them, as declared in the next verse.

21. *them that are given to change*—That is, innovators, who, in religion, are generally dupes or fanatics; in politics, discontented and rebellious.—See Doederlein, Scholia.

22. *And who knoweth*—Their calamity comes unlooked for and unexpected.

23. *These things also*—I can see no reason for supposing, with Durell, that this hemistich is an addition by some later hand; or that it is the Inscription to Proverbs, collected from the books of wise men subsequent to the age of Solomon, as Grotius thinks. It is merely intended to draw attention to what follows, intimating, that these things also which follow deserve the consideration of those who desire to become wise.

25. *But to them, &c.*—This verse is opposed to the preceding one. As those who justify the wicked will be generally hated, so those who rebuke them will be esteemed by the virtuous, and will obtain the approbation of God. There is an ellipsis of רָשָׁע to be supplied from verse 24, and יַנְעִים is put impersonally, “redarguentibus suave erit,” Cocceius.

— *the blessing of the good*—טוֹב appears to be a noun of multitude for good men; (see Poli Synop. ;) if it were an adjective, it should be טוֹבָה, and בְּרִכַּת should not be in regimen,

though there are some exceptions to this rule, where of two nouns the former is in regimen, and the latter supplies the place of an adjective.—Schroeder, *Gram. reg.* 7; Robertson, p. 294.

26. *Every man, &c.*—The best explication of this elliptical verse is to supply *וְאִם*, as in the authorized translation; that is, every man will reverence and esteem him who returns just and equitable answers. *נֶשֶׁק* seems sometimes to mean, *to reverence and esteem*, because a kiss was the token of honour and respect; as, Gen. xli. 40; 1 Kings, xix. 18; Ps. ii. 12; Hos. xiii. 2, where see Bishop Horsley. Other interpretations are given in Schultens, *Poli Synop.*, and Harmer's *Observations*, vol. ii. p. 351, et seq.

27. *Prepare, &c.*—The meaning is, that it behoves men to use due circumspection and foresight, and to make the necessary preparations before engaging in any undertaking. I have followed Hunt in taking *לֵךְ* for a verb, not for a pronoun, with *ל* prefixed, according to the Masoretic punctuation, and dividing the verse into three lines. But see Schnurer in loc. and Storrii *Observat. ad Syntax*, p. 294.

28. *Neither deceive*—*הַפְתִּיתִי* I take to be the second singular preterite Hiph. from *פָּחַח*.

29. *to every man*—*לְאִישׁ* “unicuique,” Vulgate, Schultens. Revenge is strictly prohibited.—(Lev. xix. 18; Rom. xii. 17.) Vengeance belongeth unto the Lord.—Deut. xxxii. 35; Rom. xii. 19; Heb. x. 30.

31. *stone wall*—It appears from several passages of Scripture, that stone walls were in frequent use in the East.—Parkhurst, גִּיר; Harmer's *Observations*, vol. ii. p. 219, et seq.

32. *Then I saw*—This asyndeton is very energetic.

34. *But thy poverty*].—The style is abrupt; but the chain of reasoning appears to be this, that, from considering the effects of sloth and indolence, we receive instruction; we are taught diligence, because we see ruin pressing upon the sluggard who ever desires a little more sleep, &c.—Compare ch. vi. 10, 11, which is almost verbally parallel to this passage.

CHAPTER XXV.

1. *These also are the Proverbs, &c.*].—As no reason appears for questioning the genuineness and authenticity of this title, we must allow that this part of the book, from ch. xxv. 1, to ch. xxx. 1, is the genuine production of Solomon, reduced into its present state by the men of Hezekiah. The canonical authority of these five chapters is proved by their being cited in the New Testament.—(See Prel. Diss.; Gousset, in *pnx*, B.) Lightfoot's notion is: "In the purging and cleansing of the Temple, which Hezekiah performed in the beginning of his reign, it may well be supposed, that that copy of Solomon's Proverbs was found mentioned Prov. xxv. 1, and was transcribed by some of Hezekiah's servants out of the old manuscript, which, it is like, was much soiled and spotted with time and neglect."—(Works, vol. i. p. 106.) Doederlein thus characterizes this part of the book: "Universa autem collectio axiomata offert sensus fere abstrusioris et magis ad ænigmaticam rationem composita, quam parte priore, præceptis moralibus ditiore, reperimus." *pnx*; see ch. viii. 18, note.

2. *It is the glory, &c.*].—The counsels, designs, and operations of God are inscrutable, (Deut. xxix. 29; Rom. xi. 33, 34,) and man can only adore with reverent humility that which is so far exalted above his reach. It, therefore,

redounds to the glory of God, that his ways are unsearchable, and, as it were, concealed; but it is honourable to kings to search out vice, in order to punish it, virtue, in order to reward it, and truth, in order to promulgate it. אלהים has not been used before in the Proverbs, but its being opposed to kings shows, that it cannot here mean magistrates. Indeed, it may be doubted, whether it ever bears that signification; though to detail the reasons for this doubt would lead to a discussion foreign from my present design.

3. *The heavens for height, &c.*—Why there is no searching the heart of kings, will be answered differently by different people; but it is the universal confession of the most experienced in state affairs, that it is difficult to discover the heart of kings amidst the flatterers of royalty, state mysticism, and court intrigue. *h quod attinet ad, with respect to*, (Noldius, 30,) i. e. there is no searching the heavens, with respect to, or on account of, their height; nor the earth, on account of its depth. So Hodgson and Schultens.

4. *Take away*—הגב is generally thought to come from הגב, which Schultens (conferring it with the Arabic هبجي, sensu fervoris æstuantis, sive exæstuationis) renders “Exæstuate scorias ab argento.” Michaelis (Suppl. No. 954) and Schulz (in Cocc. Lex.) derive it from גב, which they confer with the Arabic وجي, signifying, in the fourth conjugation, *removit procul a se alium*; but this Arabic word has other significations, and the sense given by Schultens to the other is, perhaps, doubtful, certainly not apposite. The context, however, proves, that הגב means *to remove, to take away*.—Compare 2 Sam. xx. 13; Isa. xxvii. 8.

— *And there shall come, &c.*—This is a difficult clause, and I have met with nothing satisfactory. Le Clerc, supplying מ before כלי, renders it “*purum prodibit conflatori vas.*”

Hodgson's version is, "And pure metal shall come forth to the refiner;" but כלי never, as far as I can find, has this sense. May it not be rendered, "Take away the dross from the silver; and it (the silver) shall come out *pure* to him who maketh vessels?" I merely propose this as a possible explanation, leaving it to the judgment of the reader; for, though both Schultens and Schroeder (*Observat. ad Orig. Heb.* p. 163) contend, that the idea of purity and splendour is contained in נר, I think they have not given sufficient proof; and, as the common and usual signification of words should not be departed from without strong reasons, I prefer the literal rendering, namely, "And it shall come forth to the finer a vessel," or, "A vessel shall come forth to the finer," *i. e.* he shall make a vessel of it. According to this the translation may be,

"Take away the dross from the silver,

And the finer (or workman) will make a vessel of it."

This agrees with Dathe's version; and, if not absolutely required, is certainly strongly supported by its connexion with the following verse.

5. *Take away, &c.*]—This is to be taken in connexion with verse 4. If the dross be taken away from the silver, the workman may make it a beautiful and useful vessel; in like manner, if the wicked be taken away from the king, his throne shall be established in righteousness. לפני *ab, from.* —(Noldius, 2.) "Impios ministros a præsentia regis repelle," Doederlein.

6. *Arrogate not*]—תחורר "ne gloriosus appareas," Vulgate; תחורר *ne glorieris*, Syriac; and so Targum.

— *in the place of great men*]—In the situations appointed for men of high rank.

7. *For it is better, &c.*]—Our Saviour, probably, alludes to this passage Luke, xiv. 8. Grotius, Geier, Houbigant, following the LXX and Vulgate, connect the last line with the next verse, but without necessity.

— *whom thine eyes have seen*]—"Hoc est, cui te propius admovisti, ita ut eum familiariter et veluti e proximo intueri posses."—Capelli Crit. Sac. p. 817.

8. *Lest thou know not*]—Jun. and Trem. Doederlein, Dathe, Dimock, take פ for a verb, i. e. "Consider (perpende) what thou wilt do in the end thereof." It certainly may be the imperative, from פן, (Ps. lxxxviii. 16,) or from פנה, the final ה being dropped; but this is unexampled, and פ is most naturally construed as a particle. Durell's version is, "Go not hastily to strive, lest thou do anything in the end thereof, whereby thy neighbour may put thee to shame:" so Le Clerc and Hodgson. I would gladly accede to this, could such an interpretation of א before a verb be sufficiently supported; but, as this does not appear to be the case, (see Gousset, פן,) it is best to supply the ellipsis as in the common translation, which is here adopted.

9. *If thou, &c.*]—I have supplied the particle *if*, after Dathe, as it renders the sense clearer. If this should not be admitted, the second line should begin with "but"—"But discover not the secret of another," however much thou mayst be inclined to do it, either to strengthen thy cause, or to provoke thy adversary. "To tell our own secrets," says Dr. Johnson, "is generally folly, but that folly is without guilt; to communicate those with which we are entrusted is always treachery, and treachery, for the most part, combined with folly."—Rambler, No. 13.

10. *put thee to shame*]—Μη σε ονειδιση, LXX; "ne forte insultet tibi," Vulg. So כסח is used ch. xiv. 34, where see the note.—See Michaëlis, Suppl. ad Lex. No. 794.

11. *Is like apples, &c.*—A word spoken fitly and in season is as grateful to the soul as delicious fruits served up at banquets are to the guests in hot and sultry regions. תפוח probably means *the citron*, or *orange*. I refer with pleasure to Parkhurst, נפח, 7, 8, and Harmer's Observations, vol. ii. p. 160, et seq.

— *in curiously-wrought baskets*—במשכיות: this root clearly denotes *pictures, figures, or engravings*, Levit. xxvi. 1; Numb. xxxiii. 52; Isa. ii. 16; Ezek. viii. 12; and here signifies the curiously-wrought and ornamented baskets in which fruit was served up at royal banquets.

— *fitly spoken*—דבר means not spoken *simply*, but spoken *fitly, appropriately*; for the Hebrews sometimes used words, in themselves implying neither praise nor blame, in a sense κατ' ἐξοχήν, to denote some degree of excellence; as, “man,” for wise man, ch. xiii. 2; “weights,” for just weights, ch. xvi. 11; “wife,” for good wife, ch. xviii. 22, where see the note.

— *in its season*—על אפניו, literally, “upon its wheels;” a figurative expression for opportunely, seasonably, corresponding with דבר בעתו ch. xv. 23; ἐν καιρῷ αὐτοῦ, Sym.; “in tempore, suo,” Vulgate; and so Targum, perhaps; but see Castell and Buxtorf, Lex. Talm. in פסא. In Arabic, اَفَان means *tempus, tempestas, καιρος*.—(See Golius, p. 128.) In the opinion of Durell, על אפניו means “in reply, or in repartee,” and he renders the verse, “A word spoken in reply is like oranges (or, golden apples) in silver vessels:” but this is too confined a sense.—See an elegant explication of this verse in Lowth's Prælectiones, xxiv. p. 314, Oxon. 1810.

12. *As an ear-ring, &c.*—“Sententia est, qui objurgantem audiat, a multis, in quæ incidere potuisset, periculis immunem fore; quam ut elegantius dicat Salomon, comparat

admonitiones inauribus, quæ plerumque amuleta erant, et custodire aures credebantur, ne verbum malum intrare posset.”—Michaelis, *Notæ et Epim. in Lowthi Præl.* p. 60, Oxon. 1810.

13. *As the cold of snow, &c.*]—A faithful messenger is as refreshing to the soul of those who send him, as wine cooled with snow is to the thirsty and parched reaper. “Geierus doubts,” says Harmer, “whether the custom of cooling wine with snow was so ancient as the days of Solomon; but surely Proverbs, xxv. 13, puts the matter out of question: the royal preacher could not speak of a fall of snow in the time of harvest; that must have been incommoding, instead of pleasurable, which it is supposed to be; he must be understood, then, to mean liquids cooled somehow by snow.”—(Observations, vol. ii. p. 156, ed. Clarke. See also note in Mant’s Bible, and Burder’s Oriental Customs in loc.) “The inhabitants of the hot climates of the East,” says the learned Hunt, “who make use of snow to cool and dilute their liquors in the summer season, have their *snow-houses*; which are certain underground vaults or cellars, where they lay up vast quantities of it either in earthen vessels, or close-wrought baskets, to be kept the year round; as well for sale as for their own private use.”—(Observations on the place.) This writer exercises much ingenuity in endeavouring to prove, that כֶּזַח means a *pot*, or *basket*, or *vessel*; but Vulgate and Targum render it “cold;” not one of the ancient versions by “vessel.” כֶּזַח, צֶזַח, in Chaldee, mean *cold*; and this sense is very suitable to the passage before us. By rendering it “vessel,” the comparison is lost, unless “vessel” be understood figuratively, for the cooling liquor within, which would coincide in sense with the authorized version. The same notion, however, is adopted by Michaelis, Suppl. No. 2172, and Hodgson.

14. *gifts*—שקר במתח שקר is rendered literally, by LXX, Syriac, Targum, Sym. E. T. &c. “a false gift;” but it seems rather to denote gifts promised, yet never bestowed; “vir gloriosus, et promissa non complens,” Vulgate. So it is understood by Vat. Piscat. Le Clerc, Michaëlis, Doederlein, Dathe.

15. *the bone*]—Metaphorically for hatred or anger; “duritiam,” Vulgate; “what is stubborn,” Hodgson.—See Poli Synop.

16. *Hast thou found honey?*]—This aphorism is to be understood in a general sense, namely, that pleasures of every description are to be enjoyed with moderation; for too great indulgence in them produces disgust and satiety, and not unfrequently more serious evils.—Compare verse 27.

17. *Let thy foot, &c.*]—A particular illustration of the preceding general remark. יקר in Hiph. *to make precious* or *rare*, i. e. “Make thy company valuable and precious to thy neighbour, by not giving it him too often.”—Hodgson. So the Syriac version.

18. *A maul*]—It is difficult to say exactly what is meant by מפּיץ, though, by being joined with a sword and arrow, it undoubtedly denotes some warlike instrument. It is either derived from פּוץ or נפץ.—See Cocceii Lex. in both words.

19. *Confidence, &c.*]—The perfidious afford no more assistance in time of trouble, than a broken tooth in manducation, or a dislocated joint in walking.

20. *As he that taketh away*]—This is an ambiguous verse as to the meaning of particular words, without altering the general sense of the proverb. ערה means *transivit* Job, xxviii. 8; hence, in Hiph. *to cause to pass*, i. e. *to take away*. Such is the meaning in Chaldee. Also the Arabic عدا,

in conjugation 2, and the Syriac ܒܢܝ, in Aphel, denote *fecit ut transiret, abstulit*. In this sense the Hebrew is rendered by Syriac and Targum. On the other hand, ערה certainly means *to adorn, to put on*, as Ezek. xvi. 11, xxiii. 40; Isa. lxi. 10; Job. xl. 10, &c. and so it is understood in this place by Gousset, Schultens, and Parkhurst, who thus explains it: “The putting on of a garment (not in cold weather, as translated, but) in the day of cooling, i. e. in the hot summer weather, vinegar upon natron, and he who singeth, or the singing of songs to an afflicted heart (are alike,) that is, unseasonable and troublesome.”

— *nitre*—נחר, the *natrum* or *nitre* of the ancients, which ferments when mixed with acids.—(Parkhurst, Taylor’s Concordance.) Such is its meaning in Jer. ii. 22, the only other place where it occurs.—(See Blaney in Jer. and Michælis, Suppl. No. 1682.) But Schultens, appealing to the Arabic نذرة *confossio penetrans*, (see Golius, p. 2301,) renders it, “acetum super ictu altius adacto:” so the LXX, and it is approved by Doederlein and Dathe. Upon the whole, the standard version seems to be adequately supported.—See Gill’s Bible.

22. *For thou shalt heap, &c.*—The sense of verses 21, 22, is, that by kindness and benevolence towards an enemy, thou wilt cause him to grieve and lament at having injured thee; in consequence of which he will lay aside his enmity, and be reconciled to thee; and for thy humane conduct thou wilt be abundantly rewarded by the Almighty. Such a treatment of enemies is enjoined by our blessed Lord Matt. v. 44. That this is the true interpretation appears from Rom. xii. 20, where the apostle has quoted this passage according to the LXX: “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves; but rather

give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Here the apostle exhorts us not to return evil for evil; but to treat even enemies with kindness and charity, as that is the most likely way to soften them, and to make them lay down their enmity. So it is explained by Wolfius, Doddridge, Schleusner, Macknight, &c. But others suppose the meaning of the apostle to be, that by such a conduct thou wilt bring down the wrath of God upon thine enemy. So Estius, Grotius, Whitby, and some in Poli Synop. The former exposition is preferable; for, 1. The context in Romans treats of the way to overcome evil, to vanquish or subdue it, which is by doing good, not of the way to bring the wrath of God upon it. 2. The apostle cannot be supposed to propose it as a reason for a certain conduct, that it will bring down the wrath of God, even upon enemies, whom we are taught to forgive, and pray for. 3. The passage of Proverbs, which St. Paul adduces to strengthen his argument, does not relate to the divine wrath and vengeance, but to the reconciliation of enmities. It is objected, that the phrase, "coals of fire," in other places, signifies the wrath and indignation of God: Isaiah, lvii. 14; Ezek. x. 2. Compare 4 Esdras, xvi. 52. But in Ps. cxi. 10, the phrase may mean as in Proverbs, though I acknowledge that it more probably denotes *lightnings*. Compare Psalm, xviii. 13, 14. Whatever the phrase, "coals of fire," may signify in other places, there can be no doubt that the scope of both passages (*i. e.* Proverbs and Romans) is to admonish us not to return evil for evil, but contrariwise, blessing, with acts of kindness, and offices of charity.—(Rom. xii. 17; 1 Thess. v. 15; 1 Pet. iii. 9.) חחח; see ch. vi. 27, note.

23. *bringeth forth*—I have adopted the marginal translation of מְחַלֵּל, because it is the usual meaning of the word; because the parallelism requires it; and because it is so rendered by LXX, Syriac, Targum, and Aq. The Vulgate, however, has “dissipat,” and Sym. διαλυει; so Parkhurst, &c. Those who adopt this latter interpretation are mainly influenced by the idea, that the north wind chiefly brings dry and clear weather. But this, probably, was not the case in Palestine. R. Levi Ben Gersom says, “The north wind produces rain at Jerusalem, because it brings there the vapours arising from the sea which lies to the north of it.” “The sacred writers, having few or no intermediate points, might call that north, which was only northward. In this manner will the wind, in its passage, brush along the skirts of the Mediterranean; and may, by dipping its wings in that sea, collect a sufficient quantity of rain, whereby to water the fields of all Judea; and, indeed, the more westerly parts of Judea might be watered from this sea, if the wind blew directly from the north.”—Hunt’s Observations in loc. who has well defended the version here adopted.

— *And a backbiting tongue*—Literally, “a secret tongue,” i. e. secret, clandestine, calumnious speech, which irritates as much as an open and manly attack.

24. *It is better, &c.*—See ch. xxi. 9, note; also ch. xix. 13, note.

26. *erring*—שָׁט is rendered, by the ancient versions and several moderns, “falling down,” which is to be taken in a moral sense, *slipping, making a slip, a faux pas*.—(Parkhurst.) When this happens, as is sometimes the case, to a good man, “instead of being the source of justice, and the oracle of truth, he is like a fountain, whose sides are so trodden down,

and waters disturbed by mud and dirt, that it is no longer capable of refreshing those who resort to it, but is, on the contrary, become offensive and loathsome.”—Hunt.

27. *It is not good, &c.*—Of the multifarious expositions of this verse, the most simple and easy appears to be, to understand it in connexion with the preceding one, referring the affix in נְבִרִים to צִדִּיק, a noun of multitude. Thus, (verse 26) The slips and errors of the righteous are injurious in various ways; (verse 27) it is not good, therefore, to eat much honey, to indulge too much in pleasure, (see verse 16,) which causes many errors and transgressions; but it is good for the righteous to seek their own glory, by steadily adhering to the paths of virtue. By way of specimen, it may be worth while to observe, that this verse is interpreted allegorically by the lovers of mystical exposition. By “honey,” they say, is meant physical and metaphysical investigations, such as concerning the origin of the world and of evil, the nature of the human mind, the economy of the universe, and the like, which are called “honey,” because the contemplation of them is sweeter and more delightful than of moral truths. The Paræmiast exhorts men not to indulge too much in these speculations, because it may create weariness and disgust, in like manner as too much of luscious food creates nausea and distaste.—See more in Vitringa, *Observat. Sacræ*, vol. ii. lib. 6, cap. 20.

28. *He that hath, &c.*—The man who has no control over his spirit is as liable to the attacks of sin, that formidable spiritual enemy, as a city, whose walls are broken down, is to the assaults of hostile foes.

CHAPTER XXVI.

2. *As the sparrow, &c.*—The comparison in this verse is not easily discovered, and, accordingly, it has been variously explained. I take it to be this, viz. Unjust maledictions shall have no effect, and shall be as much without object, as the wanderings of the sparrow and the flights of the swallow appear to be.—(See Dathe's note, and Capelli Crit. Sac. p. 273, ed. Vogel.) The verse may, perhaps, be rendered, "As the sparrow for, or, with respect to its wandering, and the swallow for, or, with respect to its flying," viz. are apparently without object; "so the curse that is without cause shall not come," shall not arrive at its object.

3. *A whip, &c.*—Something must be supplied to complete the sense, either as in the version, or comparatively. "As a whip is for the horse, &c. so is a rod for," &c. Michaelis thought the first line should be read in an inverted order, i. e. "A bridle for the horse, and a whip for the ass." According to our European notions, this would be preferable; but we are to consider, that the ass, in eastern countries, was a larger, more beautiful, and more spirited animal than in cold northern regions, and might, therefore, require the bridle to guide it, as much as the horse did the whip to accelerate its pace. "Asini in Oriente, si sedulo educantur, jumenta sunt impigra, alacria, specie pulchra, et minime ignobilia; quare magni æstimantur, et tropice pro hominibus sedulis et industriis veniunt, Gen. xlix. 14."—Jahn, Archæolog. Bibl. § 48, p. 85. See some excellent observations in Parkhurst, מנחם.

5. *Answer a fool, &c.*—There is an apparent contradiction between this and the foregoing verse, which Dr. Kennicott (Second Diss. p. 359) thought should be removed by altering the text, agreeably to the Syriac and Targum, namely,

“Answer a fool according to thy wisdom,” &c.; but this emendation is rash and unnecessary. The Caph, in verse 4, denotes similitude, in verse 5, fitness and propriety. Thus, (verse 4) “Answer not a fool according to his folly,” with folly similar to his, “lest thou also be like unto him:” but (verse 5) “answer a fool according to his folly,” according as his folly requires, *i. e.* return him such answers as befit his folly, “lest he be wise in his own conceit.” The reasons subjoined to each precept confirm this interpretation.—See Warburton’s *Doctrine of Grace*, Prefat.; Fuller’s *Harmony of Scripture*, p. 17; and Geierus.

6. *Cutteth off*, §c.]—The sense probably is, He who sends a message by a fool, does the same as if he cut off the messenger’s feet, and in consequence of his imprudence suffers damage, by having his message delayed, mistaken, or perverted. There is confessedly a difficulty in this verse, and some critics would alter the text, though no authority can be adduced for it.

—*drinketh*]—“To drink,” in Scripture language, sometimes denotes to suffer injury.—(Job, xxi. 20; Ps. lxxv. 8; Jer. xxv. 16, xlix. 12; Obad. 16; Habac. ii. 16.) So *πινω* is used.—Schleusneri Lex.

7. *As the legs*, §c.]—As the legs are weak through lameness, so a proverb in the mouth of a fool is destitute of strength and energy, because it is applied improperly and injudiciously. *ידלי* is irregularly formed from *דל*, in the explanation of which Parkhurst is very successful: or it may be derived from *לל* *wasted, exhausted, &c.* As *דל* denotes *to draw water*, some explain the image by that of the two buckets of a well going up and down alternately, which excellently paints the limping of the lame.—(Gousset, Dindorf, Schultens, *Animadvers. inter Opera Minora*, p. 232, and his immensely long note in loc.) Hunt properly understands the *מ*, in *מפסח*, as a

preposition, "through lameness:" the English translation, "the legs of the lame," would require **עקב** to be in regim.

8. *As he that*—The honour like the stone is thrown away. **רנב** *lapidare, to stone*; hence **מרגמה** *an instrument to throw stones, a sling*. So LXX, Syriac, and Targum; and this is greatly confirmed by **צרר**, from **צרר** *to bind*, which well applies to the fixing a stone in a sling. The margin of E. T. is, "As he that putteth a precious stone in an heap of stones;" and this is approved by some.—(See Poli Synop. and Parkhurst.) The Vulgate is, "Sicut qui mittit lapidem in acervum Mercurii," as he that casts a stone to Mercury's heap; an interpretation defended by Cocceius, Grotius, &c. A custom anciently prevailed of piling up heaps of stones to point out the way, and travellers threw stones to the heap in honour of Mercury, the guardian of the ways. These were called *ερμαιοι λοφοι, lapidum acervi Mercuriales*, or *ερμαια*. According to this view of the passage the meaning is, "As he who throws a stone to Margeemah, or the heaps of stones in honour of Mercury, profits nothing, because he throws it to an insensible idol; so is he who gives honour to a fool."—(See Buxtorf, *Lex. Talm.* p. 1263; Scaliger, *de Emend. Temp. lib.* v. p. 486; and particularly Selden, *de Diis Syris*, Syntag. 2, cap. 15; and Burder's *Oriental Customs*.) But, as Noldius remarks, (Annot. 1373,) it is not likely that this pagan custom prevailed in Judæa at the time of Solomon. More probable is the interpretation of Schultens, namely, As the confining a precious stone in the sepulchral heap of an executed malefactor; so is he who gives honour to a fool; both are useless. In this he has been followed, with some little variation, by Dathe; and that it was an Oriental custom to raise heaps of stones over the bodies of malefactors, who perished by a violent death, in order, most probably, to serve as a perpetual monument of their infamy, appears from Joshua, vii. 26,

viii. 29; 2 Sam. xviii. 17.—(See Michælis, Commentaries, Art. 235.) The first interpretation, however, being supported by those valuable versions, the LXX and Syriac, and being strictly analogical, is to be preferred.

9. *As a thorn, &c.*—A proverb in the mouth of a fool as often injures him, as a drunkard is wounded when he handles thorns. עלה, literally, “to go up, to ascend;” hence *to enter into, to pierce, to wound*: and it is to be supplied in the second line, it being usual, in this book, for both hemistichs to be governed by one verb. The verse may, perhaps, be better rendered,

“As a thorn woundeth in the hand of a drunkard,
So does a proverb in the mouth of fools.”

10. *The great God, &c.*—There is scarcely a verse in the whole Old Testament of greater ambiguity than this, nor one where the discrepancy of ancient and modern translators is greater. The words שכר, מחולל, רב, have various significations, and neither the context nor the construction defines their meaning. According to my rule in doubtful cases, I have adhered to the received version; but am far from being satisfied with it.

11. *As a dog, &c.*—A strong image, representing the fool’s propensity to iterate his offences, however disgusting.—Compare 2 Pet. ii. 22, and Vorstius, de Adagiis, cap. 4.

13. *The slothful man, &c.*—See ch. xxii. 13, note.

14. *As the door, &c.*—The sluggard turns round in bed, without rising from it, as a door upon its hinges, to which it remains fixed.

15. *The sluggard, &c.*—See ch. xix. 24, note.

16. *The sluggard is wiser, &c.*—That is, he is totally regardless of admonition. Though men of judgment may endeavour to convince him of his error, he still perseveres in it, and pretends to justify it.—(See Durell.) משיבי טעם returning discreet and sensible answers; “qui prudenter respondent,” Dathe.

17. *As he that, &c.*—He will have cause to repent his folly, as he who seizes a passing dog is in danger of being bitten.

— *that passeth by*—עבר, according to the Masoretic punctuation, belongs to the second hemistich, but Castalio and Dathe properly join it to the first. כלב עבר “a dog that passeth by.” It will be apt to bite any one who attempts to seize it.

18. *As a madman*—מחלהל is απαξ λεγόμενον, in the illustration of which the Syriac and Chaldee dialects afford no assistance; and as to the Arabic, that inexhaustible source of German philology, it affords no certain derivation. Different Arabic words have been appealed to, (see Schultens and Michælis, Suppl. No. 1277,) and ולה, in Arabic, denotes *mente turbatus fuit*; but מחלהל cannot be analogically deduced from it. Capellus, Le Clerc, the elder Michælis, &c. adopt, from the Arabic, the sense of *ludit*, which, they suppose, is confirmed by verse 19, *i. e.* as he who in sport casteth firebrands, &c. This, however, is not sanctioned by the ancient versions. Upon the whole, the traditionary interpretation, *to be mad, furere*, is to be preferred, as it suits the context, is supported by the Greek version published by Valloison, and possibly by the LXX and Symmachus.

— *and death*—מוֹת, put for “כלי מוֹת *instrumentu mortis*, *i. e.* letalia arma.”—Waltheri Ellipses Heb. p. 61.

20. *Where no wood, &c.*—Compare ch. xvi. 28.—See Schroeder, Obs. ad Orig. Heb. p. 101.

22. *The words, &c.*—This verse is, verbatim, like ch. xviii. 8, where see the note.

23. *As drossy silver, &c.*—Lips making warm professions of friendship, if the heart be wicked, will be found as empty and contemptible as a broken vessel glazed or silvered over, which, though it has a beautiful appearance, is perfectly useless. כסף סינים, literally, “silver of drosses,” by which is probably meant the lead separated from silver, with which earthen-wares are glazed. So it seems to be understood by Vulgate, Syriac, Targum.—(See Poli Synop. and Michaelis, Suppl. No. 1707.) But some think it denotes *well refined silver, silver separated from the dross*; (Hunt, Dimock, &c. ;) but refined silver is never so denominated in Scripture, and earthen-wares are not covered with refined silver, but with a preparation of lead, which may well be called silver of dross, or drossy silver.

24. *dissembleth*—נכר *to estrange, to alienate*, ינכר “labiis suis alium se simulat,” Cocceius. This is confirmed by the second hemistich and the next verse; but the ancient versions render it “cognoscitur,” is known, which the word, perhaps, may bear; though I agree with Parkhurst, that it is better to distinguish it from הכר *to acknowledge, agnoscere*.—See ch. xx. 11, note.

25. *For he is full, &c.*—שבע “seven,” E. T., LXX, &c.: a certain number for an uncertain, denoting very many, agreeing in sense with Durell's version, which I have adopted, as being more perspicuous.

26. *Hatred may, &c.*—Though hatred may be so disguised, under specious pretexts, as to gain the applause of

admiring crowds, yet its wickedness shall be revealed in the judicial assembly.

— *with acclamation*—במשאון, from שמה *tumultuit*, seems to denote the acclamations of admiring multitudes.—(Schult., Doederlein, Dathe, Parkhurst.) If it be derived from נשא *vocem extulit*, it may have the same meaning.—(Compare Zech. iv. 7. See Doederlein.) But some render it “by deceit,” others, “in private.”

27. *Whoso diggeth, &c.*—He who meditates pernicious designs, or contrives wicked schemes against another, shall himself be the sufferer. This doctrine is repeatedly enforced, ch. xxviii. 10; Ps. vii. 15, 16; Eccles. x. 8, and must be understood in reference to the temporal retribution under the Mosaic Dispensation. Under the ordinary government of Providence, however, the retribution, though often future, is no less certain.

— *And he that rolleth a stone*—That is, with the intent of causing others to stumble against it.

28. *A lying tongue, &c.*—A man, according to the remark of Tacitus, generally hates those whom he has injured.

— *afflicted by it*—רבה *to bruise, to afflict*, hence רבני “its afflicted,” *i. e.* those who are injured by a lying tongue. It is remarkable, that the versions of the Polyglott render the first clause “A lying tongue hateth truth;” but, though Le Clerc adopts it, this sense cannot be extracted from the present Hebrew text. He and Durell think, that the authors of these ancient versions read רבית *pure things*, giving it this meaning from its usage in Syriac and Chaldee; a conjecture destitute of any rational foundation.

CHAPTER XXVII.

4. *Wrath is cruel, &c.*—R. Levi relates a story of two persons, the one *covetous*, the other *envious*; to whom a certain king promised to grant whatever they should ask, and *double* to him that asked last: the covetous man would not ask first, because he hoped for the double portion; nor would the envious, that he might not benefit the other; but at length he requested that *one* of his eyes might be taken out, in order to deprive his companion of *both*.—(Dimock, Poli Synop.) This story well illustrates the force of envy. “*Invidia intinuius penetrat, lente serpit, extirpari nequit*,” says Geier.

— *outrageous*—Literally, “an inundation;” “*ira est tanquam fluvius, rupto aggere, agrum inundans*,” Cocceius.

5. *secret love*—Namely, such love as remains concealed, without manifesting itself in offices of love; it tends to no good, whereas open rebuke often does.

6. *are deceitful*—נִעְתָּרוֹת is variously rendered by the translators; but the antithesis shows, that it here denotes *deceitful*, as being opposed to “faithful.” עֵתֶר means a *cloud* Ezek. viii. 11, and *abundance of futile talk* Ezek. xxxv. 13, and in the passage before us, *futile, deceitful, empty as a vapour*.—(See Parkhurst.) The Arabic عَثَر signifies *mentiri, fingere*, according to Simonis, Lex. Heb. and Castell, though this is doubtful.—(See Golius and Willmet.) Reiske derives it from the Arabic عَثَر *tremuit, i. e. fluctuantia, vacillantia*. Hunt thus renders this and the foregoing verse:

“Better is reproof, that layeth open (a fault);
Than love, that concealeth (it.)
Faithful are the wounds of one, who loveth:
But deceitful are the kisses of one, who hateth.”

8. *As a bird, &c.*]—It is not easy to define the precise application of this comparison, for, as it is expressed in such general terms, it may be considered in different points of view, yet just and correct in each. My own opinion is, that by “place” is meant the place of worship. As the Orientals prayed in a standing posture, מקום came to signify the place where prayer is made, 2 Chron. iii. 1; Ps. xxiv. 3; 1 Chron. xvi. 27, which, in the parallel passage Ps. xcvi. 6, is called the “sanctuary.” Thus, then, the man who deserts the place of prayer, the house of God, is like a bird that wanders from and forsakes her nest, which contains her dearest treasure, and ought to be more delightful to her than all the earth besides.—(See Michaelis, Supplem. ad Lex. Heb. No. 2247.) The Rabbins used מקום often metonymically as a name of God, of which Buxtorf has collected examples in his Lex. Chald. Rab. Talm.; and, supposing it to have this meaning here, the sense will be, He who deserts God, who becomes irreligious, is like, &c. But the former interpretation seems better supported by scriptural usage.

9. *So doth the sweetness, &c.*]—That is, so does the agreeableness of a man’s friend rejoice the heart by the counsel of the soul, by generous, friendly counsel, proceeding from the heart. “So is there sweetness in a friend who giveth counsel sincerely.”—(Hodgson.) The clause is thus rendered by Doederlein and Dathe: “At dulcior ligno odorifero amicus;” taking נַחַם for נָחַם, as Jer. vi. 6.

10. *Neither go into thy brother’s house*]—The sense is, In times of adversity have recourse to a sincere friend of thine own, or of thy father’s, rather than to a brother who has not fraternal affection; for a neighbour who is ready at hand to assist, is preferable to a brother who keeps at a distance.—Durell, Michaelis, Not. Uber. Poli Synop.

11. *That I may answer, &c.*]—Namely, that I may have a prudent son to aid me against my enemies.—Compare Ps. cxxvii. 5.

12. *The prudent man, &c.*]—The same as ch. xxii. 3, where see the note.

13. *Take his garment, &c.*]—See the parallel place ch. xx. 16, and note.

14. *He that blesseth, &c.*]—He who loads his friend with exaggerated and unseasonable praise, produces as much disgust and vexation, as if, instead of praise, he had pronounced a curse.

— *rising early*]—“ Alludit ad importunos salutatores, qui ante lucem ad fores potentium versabantur, et elata voce ingeminabant, Ave, Salve, &c.”—Tirinus. See also Geier.

— *with a loud voice*]—That is, loudly uttering exaggerated praises.

— *to him*]—This may refer either to the person blessed, or the person blessing; but probably the latter; namely, hyperbolical and ill-timed praise shall be accounted as bad as a curse to him who gives it: no regard shall be paid to it: καταρωμενον ουδεν διαφερειν δοξει, LXX; with which the other ancient versions agree.

15. *A continual dropping, &c.*]—For illustration see ch. xix. 13.

— *a very rainy day*]—סגריר occurs nowhere else; usually derived from כגר *to shut up*, and denoting “ a heavy rain, which shuts up or confines people in their houses.”—(Taylor’s Concordance.) ܣܓܝܪ has the same signification in Syriac.

— *are alike*]—נשתוו, from שווה *assimilari*; of a mixed form, from Niph. and Hiph.—See the Lex.

16. *He that hideth, &c.*—This verse, taken in connexion with the preceding one, describes the extreme difficulty of repressing the contentions of a wife, and the impossibility of concealing them from the knowledge of others. He that attempts to repress a contentious wife, attempts to hush the wind; his labour is in vain; she can no more be concealed, than the ointment of a man's hand, which betrays itself by its smell; and his misfortune in being joined to a shrew will be known to others, through her clamorous vociferations. Such was Xantippe, the wife of the virtuous Socrates, morose, quarrelsome, and addicted to daily brawls and contentions: yet when the philosopher was asked by Alcibiades the reason why he did not dismiss her, he replied, because by enduring her at home, he learned to bear the petulance and injuries of others abroad.—(A. Gellius, lib. i. cap. 17. See Laertius in Vit. Socrat.) Varro observes: “*Vitium uxoris aut tollendum aut ferendum est: qui tollit vitium, uxorem commodiorem præstat; qui fert, sese meliorem facit.*”—A. Gellius, *ibid.*

17. *As iron, &c.*—A man, by agreeable conversation and social intercourse, exhilarates the countenance of a friend, as iron is polished by the friction of iron. A description of the cheering influence of society and friendship. The nature of the comparison shows that יָדַד means *to brighten, to polish*, in the first line, and, figuratively, *to brighten, to enliven*, in the second. The ancient versions render it by words expressive of *sharpening*, but, as brightness is caused by sharpening, they probably understood it as above explained.

18. *Whoso keepeth, &c.*—Namely, who diligently attends to the cultivation of it.

19. *As the face, &c.*—A man may know what character he deserves, as well by looking into his own heart, as he can tell what sort of a face he has by looking upon the water:

for “the actions of a man show as much his heart, as the reflection of water shows his countenance.”—Durell, whose version (corresponding with that of Le Clerc, Castalio, and Hodgson) I have adopted, as, of all I have seen, the most literal and perspicuous. Nevertheless, as the comparison may be applied in many different ways, “haud sane facile est dictu, usque quo pertineat, et quibus coerceri debeat finibus,” as Bishop Lowth remarks, *Prælectiones* xxiv. p. 317.

20. *So the eyes, &c.*—By “the eyes” is meant what St. John denominates “the lust of the eyes,” (1 John, ii. 16,) and comprehends the desire of riches, superb dresses, splendid equipages, and the like, in such a degree as to absorb more serious thoughts. A passion for dress and splendour, to a certain extent, is beneficial, by encouraging arts and manufactures; but when it becomes predominant, rivetting the mind upon perishable baubles, and banishing the thought of an hereafter, it is criminal, and is condemned both by the apostle and the Israelitish monarch. As God alone can judge how far this is the case with any individual, we should be cautious in condemning those who may appear chargeable with this offence. Such as inveigh the most bitterly against elegance of dress, ornamental furniture, and all the costly articles of refined luxury, are not always of the most irreprehensible spirit: a declamation against fashion is not unfrequently prompted by a splenetic humour, an envious disposition, or a mortified ambition; and a refusal to comply with the ever-changing, but harmless, modes of life may often be suspected to arise from self-consequence and pride. More disgusting pride frequently lurks under a threadbare coat, than under vestments of the newest fashion.—For שאול ואברהם, see ch. xv. 11, note.

21. *As a fining-pot, &c.*—As a fining-pot separates the silver from the dross, and the fine gold from alloy, so a man's

conscience discerns, in the praises of others, what is deserved, and what is mere adulation; and in this way a man is proved by the speech of those who extol him. This, like many other proverbs, is to be taken as generally true; for there may be some exceptions, where the heart has been corrupted by the base flattery of sycophants.—See Le Clerc.

— *to the speech*—Literally, “to the mouth,” *i. e.* metonymically, the speech.

22. *Though thou shouldest, &c.*—Some think this is an allusion to an ancient species of punishment by bruising in a mortar.—(Parkhurst, כרש; Burder's Orient. Cust.) Doederlein, with whom Dathe agrees, supposes the image is taken from the art of the fuller in cleansing and bleaching vestments; *i. e.* “sordidissimæ vestes arte et labore abluuntur, at hominis stoliditas, longe foedissima animi macula, arte nulla purgatur.” In my opinion, the allusion is generally to anything pounded in a mortar; for there is no improbability in the supposition, that mortars of very large dimensions may have anciently been in use, as Dr. Clarke observed some of an immense size at Rosetta, used in the manufacture of coffee. “After roasting the coffee,” says he, “it is pounded in immense iron mortars: three Arabs working at a time, with enormous pestles, each as large as a man can raise. The capacity at the bottom of the mortar being only equal to the reception of one of these at a time; the pestles are raised according to the measure of an air sung by an attendant Arab, who sits near to the mortar. The main purport of this curious accompaniment of their labour is to prevent the hand and arm of a boy, kneeling by the mortar, from being crushed to atoms. The boy's arm is always within the mortar, which allows room for each pestle to pass in turn, without bruising him, if he place it in time against the side of the vessel; but as after every stroke he must stir up the powder at the bottom

with his fingers, if the precise period of each blow were not marked by the measure of the song, his arm would be struck off.”—(Travels, vol. v. cap. 1, p. 40, 8vo. edit.) The sense therefore is, Though you were to chastise the fool, who refuses all correction, ever so much, so as, if it were possible, to beat him like things pounded in a mortar, his folly would remain. This must be understood of a fool, who rejects all reproof, and despises all chastisement, or it would contradict other passages where the utility of correcting the foolish is asserted. Castell thus explains it: “Though thou thresh a fool on the floor among corn with a threshing instrument; yet wilt thou not remove his folly from him.” The Targum is to this effect. —(See Hunt.) Dr. Hodgson thinks the meaning is, not in a mortar, but “at the mortar; or, in the place where corn was ground; that is, the prison-house, where, in ancient times, slaves were punished.” That offenders were punished in the grinding-house, he appeals to Judges, xvi. 21; Terence, *Andria*, act 1, scene 2, act 3, scene 4. His version is,

“Though thou shouldest chastise a fool in the grinding-house,
Amidst the workers at the grist,
Yet will he not depart from his folly.”

This version and comment are ingenious, but, I think, not supported by sufficient evidence. “There are four words,” says Durell, “which may be considered as *απαξ λεγ.* i. e. *מכחש, תכחוש, בעלי, הריפות*.” As to the first, it is rendered *to bray*, *to pound*, by Syriac and Vulgate, Aq. Theod. It has the same sense in Syriac and Chaldee; and *כדש*, by a metathesis of Ta into Dal, has the notion of *beating*, *percutiendi*. For the other words see the Lexicons.

23. *Be diligent*, &c.]—Here follow (to the end of the chapter) some laudatory observations upon the pastoral life, addressed, with peculiar propriety, to a nation addicted to

agriculture, and the tendance of flocks and herds. Several commentators apply these remarks, allegorically, to civil and ecclesiastical governors; but whether they were so intended by the Paræmiast is extremely doubtful. It is not sufficient that a text *may* be applied in a particular manner; it must be shown that it was the intention of the writer that it should be so applied; otherwise we are extracting a meaning from his words which they were not intended to convey. More error, probably, has arisen from extending the language of the sacred penmen beyond the meaning attached to it by the author, than by not reaching the full force of his expressions.

— *the state*].—Literally, “the face of thy flock,” and so it is rendered by all the ancient versions, except the LXX; and it is a remarkably fact, of which I have known instances, that some shepherds can distinguish the sheep of their flocks, individually, by their faces: but by פָּנֶיךָ *the face*, the state and condition of the flock is most likely to be understood, and consequently E. T., “the state of thy flock,” gives the true sense.

— *Look well to*].—Literally, “apply thine heart,” *i. e.* carefully inspect, or look well to thy herds.

24. *For riches, &c.*].—This verse forms the premises from which the inference, though not expressed, is to be supplied in some such way as follows: Attend diligently to thy flocks; for other riches last not for ever, neither does the crown descend from generation to generation; but the care of flocks and herds is always necessary and profitable. כִּן, *neque, neither*.—Noldius, 8.

25. *The grass, &c.*].—This verse contains another reason why attention to flocks and herds is always profitable, namely, that the earth, through the blessing of Providence, spontaneously brings forth grass and herbage for their support,

and, therefore, but little labour is required to procure them subsistence. חֲזִיר is rendered by our translators “hay,” both here and Isaiah, xv. 6, but properly means *grass*, for in the luxurious countries of the East, where vegetation is so abundant, they have very seldom occasion to make hay.—See Parkhurst on the word.

— *the herbage*].—The critics observe, that עֵשֶׂב denotes the full, ripe grass, “herba adulta quo tempore semen concipit,” and שֶׁמֶךְ, the young and tender grass; (Michælis, Suppl. on both words; Le Clerc in Gen. i. 11;) but this distinction appears to me rather doubtful.

26. *And the he-goats*].—Commerce was at first carried on by bartering with cattle; goats, therefore, were not only useful for food, but also for trade and barter; hence they are “the price of the field,” *i. e.* so exceedingly valuable that they may be estimated at the price or worth of the field in which they are fed.—See the learned Bochart, Hieroz. par. 1, lib. ii. cap. 53.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1. *But the righteous, &c.*].—The reader will be gratified by perusing Bochart, Hieroz. par. 1, lib. iii. cap. 2, and Suicer, Thesaurus in λεων. I forbear to quote from them, as it is not necessary for illustration.

2. *By the rebellion, &c.*].—The land being split into parties by rebellion, many princes arise to vindicate their several claims; or, owing to the murders and deaths occasioned by civil commotions, prince succeeds prince in rapid succession; but by a man of understanding the established order of things is preserved.

— *the state*].—The noun כֵּן, from כָּן to *prepare, to establish*, &c. denotes, in this passage, the established state of affairs. Schultens and Dathe, deriving it from כָּנַן, to which they give the sense of *fovit calore*, render it “*incolumitas*,” appealing to Gen. xl. 13; Isaiah, xxxiii. 23; but these authorities are quite insufficient to support their interpretation. The same critics likewise give to אָרַךְ the sense of *healing, sanavit*, from the Arabic; but, as appears to me, without any justifiable grounds. Bate and Parkhurst far better explain it to *advance, proceed, prosper*; i. e. “by a prudent and knowing man a state shall prosper.” Still, there does not appear sufficient reason to adopt any other than its usual sense of *extending, or prolonging*.

3. *A man in power, &c.*].—“A lively emblem this of a half-starved villain, newly got into power; who, not content with making moderate depredations on those he has to do with, as one who should come into the same office in better circumstances would be, bears down all before him, overthrows the bounds of common justice and humanity, swallows up both the present possessions and future hopes of whole families, and spreads misery and destruction wherever he goes.”—(Hunt.) גִּבּוֹר often means *the mighty, the powerful*, and it is so understood here by Hunt, Geier, &c.

— *a sweeping rain*].—סָחַף only occurs here and Jer. xlv. 15, where it evidently means *sweeping away*; “*overthrown*,” Blaney. In Arabic it signifies *abrasit*, and in Syriac and Chaldee *destruxit, prostravit*; hence מֶטֶר סָחַף is a rain which tears up and carries away all before it. Such violent and tremendous rains, occasioning terrible inundations, are not uncommon in Judæa.—See Harmer’s Observations, vol. i. p. 68, ed. Clarke.

4. *the law*—חורה may either mean the law of God, or the precepts of wisdom delivered in this book, or sound and wholesome doctrine in general. So in verses 7 and 9.—See ch. i. 8, note.

5. *all things*—This must be taken with some limitation, namely, all things relating to “judgment,” mentioned in the first clause, by which is meant justice, right, and equity: “they that seek Jehovah comprehend all things relating to what is just and equitable.” “Every good thing,” says Aben Ezra: and so Syriac and Targum.

8. *unjust gain*—תרבית *increase*, being joined with “usury,” (נשך,) means *unjust increase, unjust gain*. This is to be understood in reference to the Jewish Theocracy. By God’s extraordinary providence over his chosen people, unjustly accumulated wealth, no doubt, generally devolved on some more worthy occupant.—(Compare Job, xxvii. 16; Eccles. ii. 26; ch. xiii. 22, and note.) We are not to expect the same *immediate* retributive justice under the general providence of God.

11. *The rich man, &c.*—A man possessed of great wealth often fancies himself much wiser and much more virtuous than he really is; but an intelligent man, however poor, will search him out, will easily discover his vanity and ignorance.

12. *But when the wicked*—When the wicked rise to power, men endeavour to hide or conceal themselves from the effects of wickedness armed with power. This exposition is proved by verse 28.

“When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,
The post of honour is a *private* station.”

Cato, quoted by Parkhurst.

I will not attempt to enumerate the different senses attributed

to **סָפַח** by the critics; but it may be observed, that it has undoubtedly two significations in Scripture, *to search*, and *to hide, conceal, or disguise*, (Taylor's Concordance,) in the latter of which it is to be taken here.

13. *He that covereth*—That is, extenuateth his sins.—See ch. x. 12, note.

14. *feareth always*—That is, who always feareth to do wrong, who has continually the fear of God before him, “Non potest dici beatus, qui perpetuo sibi ab hoste timet, quod nullo monumento nitatur; sed videtur res ad Deum referenda, quem vir religiosus semper offendere veretur; aut etiam ad officium boni viri, quod a se violatum sibi vere exprobari nolle. Reverà felix est, qui semper timet utrumque, multa enim et gravia peccata eo metu vitat.”—Le Clerc.

15. *a ranging bear*—**קָרַח** primarily denotes *to run, to rush forwards*, Gen. xv. 2; Isaiah, xxxiii. 4; Joel, ii. 9: hence **רַב שׁוֹקֵק** is a bear running about in quest of prey. This verb also means *to desire*, as it were to run eagerly after something, Ps. cvii. 9; Isaiah, xxix. 8; Gen. iii. 16, iv. 7. In this acceptation, **רַב שׁוֹקֵק** may be rendered “a ravening or hungry bear;” “ursus esuriens,” Vulgate; which is defended by Bochart, Hieroz. par. 1, lib. iii. cap. 9.

16. *A prince, &c.*—As the antithesis is not very apparent, several commentators have tried, by various expedients, to render it more clear. Thus Hunt, whose remarks are, for the most part, extremely valuable, translates the verse three different ways, all of which do violence to the strict and literal meaning of the words. If, however, **שׂוֹנֵא** (according to the Keri) be referred to the same person, namely, a prince, as the first hemistich, the antithesis will be plainer: thus, “The prince void of understanding is a great oppressor; but he (the prince) who hateth covetousness shall prolong his days.” In many of the Proverbs the antithesis is not exact.

17. *A man that, &c.*—Although the man, who violently sheds the blood of a fellow-creature, may fly to the pit, to some secret lurking-place, to conceal himself from the fury of the avenger of blood, yet let no man detain or secrete him from the just punishment of the law. Other interpretations of this very difficult verse may be seen in Poli Synop. and Schultens. I have adopted that which appears the most easy and natural. As to the avenger of blood, see ch. xxiii. 11, note.

18. *shall be saved*—That is, from temporal calamity.

— *at once*—בְּאַחַד is rendered, by some, “in una,” vel “alterutra,” scil. *viarum*; by others, “penitus;” by others, “aliquando,” “tandem;” (Noldius, 2;) by others, “semel,” Vulgate, Schultens, &c.

19. *shall have poverty enough*—Literally, “shall be satiated with poverty.” This verse occurs ch. xii. 11, verbatim, with the exception of the two last words.—See note there.

21. *To have respect, &c.*—Though to have respect of persons in judgment is not good, yet for a piece of bread, for a small reward, will a man commit this error.

— *yet for a piece of bread*—Durell renders this hemistich interrogatively, “And for a piece of bread should a man transgress?” Some think “man” does not here mean “any man,” “aliquis,” but the man who has respect of persons, mentioned in the first hemistich. “Hoc est, qui id flagitii admittere potest; ut majorem rationem habeat hominum, quam rerum, is potest, vel minimo pretio, corrumpi.”—(Lè Clerc.) So LXX, ο τοιούτος; and Vulgate, “iste.”—(Poli Synop.) “A piece of bread” seems to have been a proverbial expression, denoting a small reward or recompense. Ezek. xiii. 19.

22. *He that, &c.*—He that is in too great haste to become rich to be content with honest gains, is a man of an envious, malignant, avaricious disposition; and does not reflect, that, under the especial providence manifested to the Israelitish nation, such a conduct, so far from succeeding, will rarely fail of meeting with deserved punishment.—(See ch. xx. 21, note.) “An evil eye.”—(See ch. xxii. 9.) Margin of E. T. renders the first line, “He that hath an evil eye hasteth to be rich.” So Hodgson, &c. The sense the same.

23. *after my precepts*—Some take אחריו for an adverb, *afterwards, postquam*, E. T., &c.; but others, with more propriety, understand it as a preposition, *post me, after me*, i. e. according to my precepts and example. Thus Geier, Michælis, Not. Uber. Noldius, 13.

24. *The same is, &c.*—Such a person resembles a man whose life is devoted to the work of plundering and destroying.—Compare ch. xviii. 9.

25. *A man of insatiate desire*—רחב נפש denotes a man who is vast and insatiate in his desires, “cujus cupiditas nunquam expletur,” Doederlein; ἀπληστος, LXX, according to the Aldine, Complutensian, and Alexandrine editions. ידשן; see ch. xi. 25, xiii. 4.

26. *He that trusteth*—An overweening conceit of one’s own judgment is an indubitable evidence of folly.

— *in his own prudence*—Literally, “in his own heart;” “heart” being used, according to the custom of the Hebrews, for prudence or judgment, or rather the reasoning faculty, the intellect.—See ch. ii. 2, note.

27. *But he that hideth*—That is, he who has no regard nor compassion for the wants and miseries of the poor shall be abhorred.—Compare Isaiah, i. 15; Ezek. xxii. 26. See Schultens, de Defect. Hodiern. § 170.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1. *hardeneth his neck*—“A hard neck,” and “to harden the neck,” signify to be perverse, refractory, contumacious; metaphorical expressions, taken from untractable oxen which do not submit quietly to the yoke.—Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 1125, ed. Dathe.

2. *are in authority*—The verb רבה *to increase, to become great*, here signifies to increase in authority and dignity, as is evident from its corresponding with מַשַּׁל, in the second hemistich.

3. *He that keepeth company*—This is literally rendered, by LXX, Vulgate, Aq. Schultens, “qui pascit meretrices.”

4. *But he that receiveth gifts*—Though תרומות elsewhere signifies *oblations* offered with a religious view, it must here mean *gifts* or *bribes* given with a design of perverting justice. So Aq. Theod. ἀνη ἀφαιρεματων.—(See Biellii Thesaurus in ἀφαιρεμα.) One indubitable application of a word is enough to establish the signification attributed to it; I cannot, therefore, agree with Durell’s emendation, who would read תרמית, and render it “the fraudulent man;” for it receives little, if any, confirmation from MSS.; and though the LXX, Syriac, Targum, and Arabic have “vir injustus,” it by no means follows that they read differently to the received text; for a man who accepts of bribes is an unjust man, and, regarding the sense alone, they might translate it “an unjust man.”

5. *for his feet*—That is, for the feet of his neighbour. He shall fall into the pit which he dug for his neighbour, as Gersom observes: but Hunt understands it, for his own feet, i. e. the flatterer’s feet.

6. *In the transgression, &c.*—In the transgression of the wicked there is a snare, by which they are caught, as a bird is entangled in the fowler's net, and brought to a miserable state of captivity and bondage; but the righteous sing and rejoice, live in a state of happiness and freedom.

— *do sing*—Schultens, conferring ירון with the Arabic رن renders it “succumbens,” (properly, “succumbit;”) Doederlein, Dathe, Schulz, deriving the sense from the same Arabic word, render it “vincit;” Michaëlis, (Suppl. No. 2347,) appealing to the Arabic رن renders it “deliberat.”—(See Golius, p. 1065 and 1070.) Amidst these uncertainties of Arabic lore, most readers, I apprehend, will agree with me in deriving ירון from רנן *to shout, to exult, to sing for joy.* So LXX, Syriac, Targum.

7. *regard not knowledge*—That is, the knowledge of the cause of the poor; for this proverb relates to judicial proceedings. The righteous, sitting in judgment, consider the cause of the poor, but the wicked regard it not. The judicial term דין confirms this interpretation.

8. *in flame*—That is, “occasion tumults and discords; or, set a city on fire, by blowing the fire of divine wrath upon it.”—(Durell.) There can be no question that יפידו may be rendered, as in E. T., “bring a city into a snare;” yet the antithesis requires the sense of *blowing up*, or *inflaming*, a sense which the word often bears, and which is adopted here by the LXX, Syriac, Schultens, Le Clerc, Poli Synop., &c.

9. *Whether he rage or laugh*—There is a very great ambiguity in these words; they may refer either to “the wise man,” or the “fool;” in my opinion to the latter, as it is not characteristic of wise men “to laugh or rage,” either in private or judicial contentions. The verse may, therefore, be

better rendered, "When a wise man contendeth with a fool, either he (the fool) will rage or laugh and there is no rest." ַ (Vau) *sive*, *either*.—Noldius, 63.

— *there is no rest*—No peace or quiet from the fool's contentions.

10. *And seek, &c.*—This hemistich is rendered by many translators, "But the just seek his soul or life," *i. e.* endeavour to preserve and protect the life of the upright. But נפש בקש in other places is used in a bad sense, *to endeavour to kill, vitæ alicujus insidias struere*, Ps. xxxviii. 13, Heb., xl. 15, Heb., liv. 5, Heb.; Exod. iv. 19; 1 Sam. xxiii. 15. It is probable, then, that such is its meaning in the passage before us; and in this sense it will suit the context remarkably well, if ישרים be understood as the nominative absolute: thus, "As to the just, (the blood-thirsty) seek their life," *i. e.* they hate the upright, and seek the life of the just.—(For examples of the nominative absolute, see Robertson's Grammar, p. 311; Schroederi Institut. reg. 33; Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 67; Horsley's Hosea, Pref. 31.) Hodgson's version is, "But the upright seek his esteem;" so Vatablus, and this makes the antithesis good, but is not supported by the Hebrew idiom.

11. *A fool, &c.*—The fool without consideration utters all his thoughts, but a wise man reserves them till a fit occasion. This is a good sense, but I am much inclined to prefer another version, namely, "A fool showeth forth all his anger; but a wise man assuageth it in secret;" *i. e.* while a fool gives way to the impulse of anger, a wise man assuageth it in secret, by reflecting upon the folly of immoderate passion, and by inwardly applying the sedatives of piety and goodness. רוח denotes *anger* ch. xiv. 29, xvi. 32; Eccles. x. 4; Zech. vi. 8; Judg. viii. 3; and so it is here rendered by

LXX, Syriac, Targum. באחר is variously rendered; but, perhaps, means *in secessu, in secreto*.—See Cocceius.

13. *The poor, &c.*—The Lord gives both to the poor and the rich to enjoy the light of life; he is the common Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor of both. Since both poor and rich must live together in society, both have the same heavenly Father, and both are upon an equality as to spiritual matters, this should excite a spirit of kindness and benevolence towards each other. This explication is confirmed by ch. xxii. 2, where see the note.

— *the rich*—That תככים, though only occurring here, means *the rich*, is clear from its being opposed to “the poor,” and from the parallel passage ch. xxii. 2; but as to its derivation, the question is more difficult to decide. Schultens illustrates it by the Arabic فَسَّاءَ *fasciæ*; hence איש תככים “*vir fasciarum, i. e. veste splendida insignis, dives.*” So Michaelis, Doederlein, Dathe, Schulz. This appears to me exceedingly forced and unnatural: I should rather derive its meaning from the Syriac and Chaldee sense of the word, *damno affecit*, and render it “oppressors;” by which the rich are meant, for such only are oppressors. Or, as חוך means *deceit*, it may be rendered, as in the standard version, “the deceitful,” if by this term the rich could be characterized.—(See Gussetius and Parkhurst.) Whatever may be its etymological meaning, it was certainly intended to denote the rich.

16. *When the wicked, &c.*—Though sinners may be multiplied and prosper for a time, yet, through the retributive justice of God displayed towards the Jewish people, they shall, in the end, fall and perish.—Compare Ps. xxxvii. 34, 36.

— *are in authority*—רבה, used as in verse 2, see note. So Tigur, Mercer, Gill.

18. *religion*—חזון, literally, “vision,” is put tropically for “revelation,” as Cocceius, whom see, and Dathe explain it. I am not sure, however, whether it would not be better to render it, “When there is no instruction the people perish.” חזון sometimes means *to perceive, to understand, to learn*, Job, xv. 17, xxvii. 12, xxxvi. 25. As it was one part of the prophetic office to teach the law to the people, it is not unlikely that חזון, signifying *prophetic vision*, should be put for every species of instruction delivered by the prophets, whether they acquired it supernaturally, or by ordinary means.—(See Geierus, Durell, Taylor's Concordance.) It must, at least, mean either *religion* or *instruction*, for it corresponds with “law” in the second hemistich.

— *perish*—Literally, “made naked,” *i. e.* “stript of their honour and defence,” as Taylor expresses it, and so perish: but Parkhurst and Robertson, in his *Clavis Pent.* No. 2755, attribute the sense of *apostatizing* to פרע, and render it, “When there is no vision, the people will break loose, or apostatize.”

19. *he will not obey*—Literally, “there is no answer;” the meaning of which is, that the wicked servant, though he understands the words by which he is corrected, he does not return the proper answer, namely, reformation and amendment. He does not obey the voice of reproof. “Servant” evidently means “a wicked servant.”

21. *He that delicately, &c.*—He that brings up a servant with greater indulgence and delicacy than are suitable to his station of life, shall lament his error, when he finds that such treatment, instead of making him active and honest, has rendered him indolent, inattentive, unfaithful, and perverse. We have in this verse two *απαξ λεγ.* מִפְּנֵי and מִנּוֹן, the former of which, in Syriac, Chaldee, and Arabic, means *to make*

delicate, to educate delicately; (see Schultens and Michaëlis, Suppl. No. 2049;) and it is rendered in the same sense by the LXX and Vulgate: the Syriac and Targum use the same root. As to the other *απαξ* λεγ. מנן, I concur with those critics who derive it from מנן *gemuit*, the Kamets supplying the place of the Aleph, as it often does. He that brings up a servant in too delicate a manner shall be מנן grieved; he shall lament it. This sense is authorized by the LXX, Syriac, Arabic, Sym. Our translators and several others render it “a son,” referring it to נין; but none of the ancient versions acknowledge this sense, and it cannot be grammatically construed as a noun signifying *son*; for it would be literally, “He that delicately brings up his servant; certainly at length shall be a son,” which is nonsense. To render יהיה “shall have him become,” as in E. T., is quite unexampled, as Hunt observes; its proper meaning is, “he shall be.” Hunt renders the first line, “He, that is indulged from a child, shall be a servant;” but, as this would require the omission of the affix in עבדו, he proposes also to take it in an active sense, “he that indulges (any one) from his youth, shall make him a servant.” Though these versions are supported by the LXX and Syriac, they, in my judgment, quite recede from the letter of the sacred text. But see Schnurrer, Diss. ad loc. quædam Prov. Salomonis.

24. *He heareth the adjuration*]}—אלה means the oath which was administered by the judge; for it was customary for magistrates to demand of accused persons, or witnesses in any cause, in the name of God, to speak the truth.—Levit. v. 1, where see Poli Synop. and the note in Mant’s Bible; Numb. v. 21; 1 Kings, xxii. 16; 2 Chron. xviii. 15; Matt. xxvi. 63. See Michaëlis, Commentaries, Art. 256.

25. *The fear of man*]}—Namely, the standing in awe of the power of man, which often leads to unworthy compliances,

and causes a person to shrink from the discharge of his duty.
—Compare Matt. x. 28.

26. *judgment*].—This may mean *justice, equity*, i. e. “Jehovah administers justice to every man:” or it may mean *fortune, fate, condition*, as משפט signifies Judges, xiii. 12; 2 Kings, i. 7; (see Geier;) that is, “Every man’s fate or condition is from Jehovah.” Bishop Lowth thus renders the verse, *Prel. Diss. to Isaiah*, p. 24, ed. 8vo.:

“Many seek the face of the prince;

But the determination concerning a man is from Jehovah.”

I suppose this coincides in sense with the second exposition above mentioned.

CHAPTER XXX.

1. *The words, &c.*].—That Agur, Jakeh, Ithiel, and Ucal are proper names admits of no contradiction; but different opinions have been entertained as to the persons designated by them. Some think, that by Jakeh David is meant, and by Agur Solomon; an opinion, I trust, fully confuted in the Preliminary Dissertation. Some also think that Ithiel and Ucal mean Christ. “*hic non vertendum ad, sed super, et de objecto intelligitur. De Christo accipe. Dictum viri de Ithiel* (i. e. de eo qui est *mecum Deus*;) אִיתִיאל idem sonat quod, עִמּוּנָא, *nobiscum Deus*; et אֻכָּל Ucal (*a יכול potens fuit,*) i. e. omnipotente.”—(Calovius. See also Cocceius and Gill.) To this I answer, 1, אִיתִי and אִיתִי are Chaldee, not Hebrew, which renders the etymology suspicious; and, even allowing this derivation, it should seem to mean *with God*, rather than *God with us*.—(Sinionis, *Onomast.* p. 494.)

2. These mystical names are nowhere else ascribed to Christ in the Scriptures; and, though he is spoken of verse 4, and perhaps verse 19, he is not the direct subject of the chapter.

3. Though the particle ל does sometimes signify *de*, *concerning*, yet its usual meaning, when construed with verbs of speaking, declaring, &c., is *ad*, *to*. Besides, the only other place where ל is construed with a ל following is Ps. cx. 1, where it unquestionably means *ad*, *to*. 4. If Agur and Jakeh be not mystical names, it is improbable that Ithiel and Ucal should be mystical names of Christ. For these reasons we may conclude, that Ithiel and Ucal were real persons; though concerning their rank, character, and situation, it is useless to form conjectures in the absence of all authentic history.—See Michaëlis, Suppl. No. 85, for another explanation.

— *which he spake*—Literally, “which the man spake,” *i. e.* Agur.

3. *I neither learned, &c.*—These expressions are applicable to Amos, who was no prophet, neither a prophet’s son, that is, had no regular education in the schools of the prophets, but was a herdsman; (Amos, vii. 14;) and likewise to any inspired writer who had not been early instructed in divine things, and had not the benefit of learning; but are wholly unsuitable to Solomon, who had been disciplined and taught by his father from early infancy, (ch. iv. 4,) and was endowed with wisdom by the inspiration of the Most High.—1 Kings, iii. 5, 12.

— *the holy*—This may signify either holy persons, or holy things; either way incompatible with Solomon. Durell’s remark, that, if persons had been meant, it would have been written קדושים, is erroneous; קדוש being often applied to persons.

4. *What is his name?*—Some of the ancient fathers, and many modern commentators, have interpreted the clauses, “What is his name? and what is his son’s name?” of the first and second Persons in the Holy Trinity; nor is there the

least doubt, that the words *may* bear this explication. Thus, “Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?” Our Saviour applies these words to himself: “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of Man, which is in heaven.”—(John, iii. 13. See Whitby.) “Who hath gathered the wind in his fists?” Who hath power over the wind to increase, restrain, and govern it according to his pleasure? Even he who “walketh upon the wings of the wind.”—(Ps. civ. 3.) “Who hath bound the waters in a garment?” *i. e.* in the sea and in clouds. “Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth *as if* it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it.”—(Job, xxxviii. 8, 9.) “Who established all the ends of the earth?” Their establishment was the effect of almighty Power. “What is his name” who accomplished these things? “And what is his son’s name?” Declare their name and nature, “if thou canst tell.” As these researches into the nature and operations of God and his Son surpass the limited powers and faculties of man, we ought to acquiesce in the knowledge, that “every word of God is pure, and that he is a shield to them that trust in him.”

To this interpretation it is objected, that it seems inconsistent with the second and third verses. Neither is it cited in the New Testament; and it is strange, that so clear a declaration that God has a Son, if it ought to be so explained, should never have been alleged by Christ or his apostles. The former of these objections scarcely requires an answer: and, as there are, undoubtedly, many passages in the Old Testament relating to Christ, not quoted in the New Testament, this circumstance is of little moment against interpreting it in reference to the Son of God. It is further objected, that this explication “implies a degree of communication of divine truths beyond what Providence chose to reveal, in so

early a period, by any of his prophets.”—(Durell in loc.) But this argument rests upon an assumption of the very thing to be proved. We can only judge of what God chose to do by what he has done; and the question is, whether he has revealed this great truth of his having a Son to the author of this chapter. But the assumption is clearly erroneous, as this truth *was* communicated at “so early a period;” for David speaks of “the Son,” (Ps. ii. 7,) and we know, from Acts, xiii. 33, and Heb. i. 5, that by his Son is meant the Son of God. The objections, therefore, against the interpretation above given are of no validity.

Those who reject it adopt a different explanation, namely, Knowest thou the name of the man who can accomplish these things? Or his son’s name, *i. e.* his disciple, who can perform them? If not, then acquiesce in the conclusion, that “every word of God is pure.” *Quis est hominum, qui id possit?* (coelum emetiri, maria comprehendere et s. p.) *Quis filius hominis, vel, ex more Hebræo, magistri alicujus discipulus et alumnus? Filii enim eruditorum sunt, qui pendent ab ore et institutione magistri. Nostine aliquem?*—(Doederlein, Institutio Theol. Christ. lib. i. cap. 1, sect. 3, § 113. See also his Scholia in loc.) The only circumstance in favour of this gloss is, that a pupil or disciple is, in Scripture, sometimes called a “son,” (ch. i. 8, note:) nevertheless, this explanation is extremely forced, and so far from growing out of the context, is scarcely compatible with it.

Upon the whole, I am decidedly of opinion, that this verse contains a clear intimation of a Plurality. To refer the clause “What is his His name? and what is his Son’s name?” to the first and second Persons in the Trinity, is a natural and unforced interpretation, very suitable to the context; and the objections that have been made to it are, as we have seen, of little or no force.

5. *Every word, &c.*—Every promise and revelation of God is pure, without error or deceit; and, therefore, we may rely upon the declarations that God will be a defence to those who confide in him. “*Metaphora frequens in Psalmis, ad divinæ Revelationis præstantiam significandam. Vide Ps. xii. 7, xviii. 31, ubi legitur hic ipse versus.*”—Le Clerc.

6. *Add thou not, &c.*—This is the inference from the two preceding verses. Since man is unable to comprehend the nature and operations of the Divine Being, we ought humbly to acquiesce in the discoveries which he has been pleased to make of himself in his revealed word; and it is wrong in man to attempt to add thereto, in the presumptuous idea of improving Revelation. Agur, probably, alludes to Deut. iv. 2, xii. 32. On the points in חוסף, see Mercer, and Altingii Fundam. Punct. p. 381.

7. *Two things, &c.*—The six preceding verses are an exordium or introduction to the following apophthegms, beginning at this verse. The two things requested by Agur are specified verse 8.

— *O God*—This must necessarily be supplied, as Le Clerc observes. Such an ellipsis is not unusual.—See Waltheri Ellipses Heb. p. 55.

8. *Remove far from me, &c.*—It is plain from verse 7, that this verse contains only two petitions, and, therefore, that the second and third lines are to be coupled together, as in the version.

— *vanity and lies*—“Vanity” is taken by some for idolatry; but it seems to have a more general sense, signifying all kinds of sin and error, which may be called vanity, because they are deceitful and disappoint expectation.

“Lies,” in like manner, denotes every species of deception, falsehood, and treachery. This petition relates to the mind, or spiritual state; the other, to the outward condition, or situation of life.

— *Give me neither poverty nor riches*—“We must not so conceive it as if he prayed absolutely against riches, or absolutely against poverty; (for so the prayer were unlawful, poverty and riches being of themselves things indifferent, and the blessing of God may go with both;) but it is a prayer of choice, or a comparative prayer; as if he had said, Rather than either poverty or riches, give me, O Lord, if it be thy will, the mean between both.”—Mede’s Disc. 28.

“Auream quisquis mediocritatem
Diligit, tutus caret obsoleti
Sordibus tecti, caret invidenda
Sobrius aula.”—Horace, Carm. l. ii. 10.

— *food convenient for me*—חֶלֶם חִי, literally, “panis dimensi mei,” i. e. a sufficiency, a competent allowance of bread. In the term “bread” the Hebrews comprehended every kind of provision, all things needful for the sustenance of life.—(Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 1256.) The meaning, then, of this part of the petition is, Give me, O Lord, a competency of those things which are necessary in the situation of life in which I am placed. This competency will vary according to the various circumstances and conditions of men: what is sufficient for one rank of life, is absolute want in another more elevated. It does not merely denote a sufficiency “to support a man in his natural life and health, as the learned and judicious Mede observes, but that which is sufficient to support and maintain him in that condition, order, degree, and calling wherein God hath placed him.” This prayer of Agur exactly corresponds with the petition in the Lord’s prayer,

“ Give us this day, *τοὺς ἄρτους ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον*,” not “ our daily bread,” but “ bread or food sufficient for us;” for *ἐπιούσιος* seems properly derived from *ἐπι* and *οὐσία*, *being*, or *substance*, i. e. food necessary for our being and subsistence. —See Parkhurst’s Gr. Lex. and Hales’s New Analysis, vol. ii. p. 1028. For other explanations of the word, see Wetstein, Schleusner, and Suiceri Thesaurus.

9. *Lest I be full, &c.*]—The sum and substance of Agur’s prayer is, O Lord, remove far from me all sin and error, all falsehood and deception: give me neither a superfluity, nor a deficiency of those things which befit my station, but a competency adapted to my rank and condition of life: lest, if I have more than enough, my heart may be tempted, through luxury, or the pride of wealth, to forget thee; or lest, if I have not a sufficiency, I should be induced to steal, or to arraign the equity of the divine government, and profane the name of my God, by perjury and blasphemy.

— *profane*]—חָפַז *to lay hold on*, here evidently means *to lay on violently, to violate*, i. e. *to profane*. I can see no reason for restricting it to false swearing; it seems to me to denote every kind of profanation of God’s name.

10. *Accuse not, &c.*]—This is to be understood cum grano salis. Be cautious in accusing a servant to his master, lest he, in return, revile thy character, and lest thou shouldst be guilty of a false accusation. Schultens inclines to interpret this of God and his worshippers; but of this there is no proof. It is not enough to show that a text *may* be applied in a particular sense; it must be shown that it *ought* to be so applied. נָשַׁל occurs, as a verb, Ps. ci. 5, in the sense of *accusing, reviling, speaking against*.

11. *There is a generation*]—Namely, there is a race of men, there are some who, &c.

15. *The horse-leech, &c.*—The most simple interpretation of this difficult passage is that proposed by Dr. Hodgson, namely, by inserting the particle of similitude: “As the horse-leech hath two daughters, *crying*, Give, give; so are there three things which are never satisfied, yea, four, which,” &c.: yet, even in this way of translating it, the end and scope of these apophthegms are not apparent; I, therefore, propose another interpretation. If this and the following verse be taken in connexion with the preceding one, they will yield a more consistent meaning than in any other way they seem capable of affording. Verse 14 describes those cruel and rapacious tyrants, who are restrained by no motives of humanity and virtue from gratifying their lust, their pride, and their avarice. People of such insatiable desires are like the horse-leech, which perpetually craves for more blood; they resemble the grave, the barren womb, &c. which are never satisfied, nor say, “It is enough.” In this view, verses 14, 15, 16, form an admirably finished picture of merciless and avaricious tyrants; and the version should be, “*They are like the horse-leech which hath two daughters, crying, Give, give; they are like three things that,*” &c.

— *horse-leech*—The ἀπαξ λεγ. ἡρίβη is explained, by Bochart, (Hicroz. par. 2, lib. v. cap. 19,) to mean *fate* or *destiny*, and her two daughters, *Sheol* and *destruction*, or, perhaps, *Sheol* and the *grave*; an explanation completely overset by the learned Hunt. Schultens, agreeing with Bochart in discarding the common interpretation, explains it by *monstrum malum et fatale*, with whom Doederlein and Dathe agree. Notwithstanding these high authorities, we have all the evidence for the received acceptation of ἡρίβη which the nature of the subject affords; for, 1. It denotes the *horse-leech* in Arabic, Syriac, and Chaldee. 2. The

ancient versions confirm it. 3. It suits the context, as appears from the expositions given above.

— *hath two daughters, &c.*—A figurative manner of expressing the eager desire and continual craving of the horse-leech for blood. The sense will be the same, if we render it, with Targum, Sym. Castell, Tig. Hunt, Durell, “The horse-leech hath two daughters, Give, give,” *i. e.* hath an insatiable desire for blood.

— *it is enough*—See Noldius, חון.

16. *the barren womb*—עֶזְרַח רָחֵם is rendered, by Hodgson, “the ravenous gier-eagle,” that is, the vulture-eagle. רָחֵם certainly means a bird of prey Levit. ii. 18; Deut. xiv. 17; but עֶזְרַח never signifies *ravenous* or *voracious*; and it occurs in the sense of *barren* Gen. xvi. 2, xx. 18; Isaiah, lxvi. 9. Besides, the common translation is sanctioned by the ancient versions.

17. *obedience*—The LXX, Syriac, and Targum render יָקָח “the old-age of his mother;” but this sense by no means suits Gen. xlix. 10, the only other place where it occurs, whereas it may there signify *obedience*. In Arabic it means *obedivit*. But see Hunt and Castelli Lex.

—*The ravens, &c.*—See a very learned and entertaining explication of this passage in Bochart, Hieroz. par. 2, lib. ii. cap. 10.

19. *The way of an eagle, &c.*—The particle כֵּן clearly shows that verses 19 and 20 are to be taken in connexion; consequently, it is a comparison between the way of an adulterous woman and the way of the things here described. The adulterous woman gads about in search of her deluded victim, like as the “eagle” takes its flight into the air to spy

out its prey; she uses every species of blandishment and insinuation to allure and beguile, as the "serpent" employs its winding and sinuous motions to pass along the rocks; she pursues a course surrounded with danger, as "a ship in the midst of the sea" is continually exposed to the fury of the tempest, and the hazard of shipwreck; and she tries every means and exercises all her sagacity to prevent the discovery of her illicit enjoyments, as a man attempts to conceal his clandestine intercourse "with a maid." Such is the conduct of a lewd woman, marked by specious dissimulation and traitorous blandishment; "she eateth and wipeth her mouth," she indulges her adulterous lust; yet artfully endeavours to conceal it, and, with unblushing countenance, asserts her innocence, exclaiming, "I have done no wickedness!" Such is the interpretation which I have been led to adopt, after a careful examination of the critics and commentators. For a review of other expositions, I refer the reader, who has patience to toil through a prolix note, consisting of twelve closely printed quarto pages, to the Commentary of Schultens.

— *the way*—That is, the mode or manner of acting, the manner of operation. דרך "*via sexcentis in locis designat institutum, intentionem, actionem, molitionem bonam, malam.*" —Schultens.

— *with a maid*—Schultens renders בעלמה "in virginitate," in his virgin state: "in adolescentia," Vulgate; so LXX, Syriac, Sym. I cannot accede to this, because, to use the words of Parkhurst, "עלמה nowhere else signifies youth or virgin state, but, in the six other texts where it occurs, a virgin or maid. Besides, a man's conduct in his virgin state does not seem anything very unsearchable, nor to suit the other subjects mentioned." Some interpret this verse allegorically of the Messiah, and this clause, of his Incarnation; but, in my judgment, with more ingenuity than truth.

20. *She cateth, &c.*]—A delicate manner of expressing impure and illicit pleasures, which are represented under the same images ch. ix. 17, xx. 17.

— *and wipeth her mouth*]—She artfully endeavours to conceal her criminal indulgences. “Occulit fascinus, quem-admodum qui furtim ac illicite cibum degustavit, os suum abstergere solet, ne cui degustasse adpareat.”—Michælis, Not. Uber.

22. *For a servant, &c.*]—According to the general observation of mankind, those who rise to elevated stations from the lowest ranks are usually the most haughty, tyrannical, and avaricious. “Asperius nihil est humili, cum surgit in altum.”—Claudian.

— *And a fool, &c.*]—“That is, a man of no principles, in affluent circumstances, and pampered, is to be considered as a pest to society.”—Durell.

23. *For an odious woman*]—That is, a woman deserving of hatred on account of her perverse disposition and bad morals. When she is married, her conduct will be base and disgusting. The LXX, Vulgate, Syriac, Targ. seem to confirm this interpretation : but Hunt, &c. think that there is an allusion to Deut. xxi. 15, and that שנואה means a woman, once hated by her husband, but who has regained his favour; and, having acquired an entire conquest over him, behaves herself in the most imperious manner.

— *And an handmaid*]—Either, by base flattery, worming herself into the affections of her mistress, who, at last, bequeaths her property to her, for it appears, from Gen. xv. 3, that even servants might, by testament, be appointed heirs; or rather, having gained the affections of her master, and supplanted her mistress, she succeeds, in her room, to be his

wife, and becomes as proud and insolent, as her former condition was base and servile. Because ירש signifies *to dispossess, to drive out*, as well as *to inherit*, LXX, Syriac, and several modern translators render this hemistich, "And an handmaid when she hath cast out, or dispossessed her mistress." Hunt's version is,

"For the hated woman, when restored to the power of a wife;
And an handmaid, when she hath dispossessed her mistress."

24. *Little upon the earth*—That is, according to the Hebrew phrase, exceeding little: thus, "the honourable of the earth," Isaiah, xxiii. 8, denote the most honourable; "them that are quiet in the land," Ps. xxxv. 20, are those who are exceedingly so.—See Rosenmuller on Ps. xxxv. 20.

—*exceeding wise*—Perhaps it would be better, by altering the points, to render this hemistich, "Yet are they wiser than the wise." So LXX, Syriac, Vulgate, Dur. Dim. Poli Synop. The four instances which follow of the power of natural instinct are intended to show, that the world was fabricated by a wise and benevolent Creator, and is preserved and governed by his providence.

25. *The ants, &c.*—See ch. vi. 6, and note. The appellation of "nation," or "people," is applied to the animal creation, Joel, i. 6, ii. 2, and instances of a similar mode of expression among the classical writers are collected by Bochart.—See Poli Synop.

26. *The conies*—I cannot find anything satisfactory in regard to what animal is meant by שפן; and were I to fill, as might easily be done, several pages with remarks, they must end with a confession of ignorance. To prevent useless labour, I refer to Parkhurst and Bochart, Hieroz. par. 1, lib. iii. cap. 33.

27. *The locusts, &c.*]—Though the locusts have no king to marshal and arrange them, yet they march forward, in their work of devastation, with regularity and order.

— *in order*]—Interpreters greatly vary respecting the meaning of $\gamma\chi\tau$. Bochart renders it “*dividens sibi, nempe prædam et spolia bellica.*” Schultens (*Animadvers. inter Op. Min. p. 238*, and on Job, xl. 25) appeals to the Arabic $\gamma\chi\tau$, which, in the third and sixth conjugation, signifies *sortiri portionem distribuere*; he, therefore, thinks that it means *an arrow*, like $\gamma\tau$, and, as the Orientals made use of arrows in the drawing of lots, he renders it, “*sortes inter se partiens.*” This custom is described at large by Pococke.—(*Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 99, Oxon. 1806.*) Hunt, alleging the authority of the Arabic, renders the verse, “The locust hath no king; but goeth forth to war, on the alarm of its whole army.” Schnurrer, Doederlein, and Dathe, ex significatione Arabica, explain it by *festinat sibi*, i. e. *celeriter egrediuntur omnes*. Such is the uncertainty of Arabic etymologies. Why may we not, without the parade of Arabic literature, consider $\gamma\chi\tau$ as the reduplicate of $\pi\chi\tau$ *divisit, distribuit*, and interpret it of the orderly arrangement and regular distribution which pervade a well-disciplined army? in this sense very applicable to the orderly course of locusts. The prophet Joel (ch. ii. 7, 8) describes the regularity of their march: “they shall march,” says he, “every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks; neither shall one thrust another, they shall walk every one in his path.”—(See Pococke’s Commentary, and particularly Bochart, *Hieroz. par. 2, lib. iv. cap. 2.*) This is confirmed by the LXX, who have $\epsilon\upsilon\tau\alpha\kappa\tau\omega\varsigma$; and the Vulgate, “*egreditur universa per turmas suas,*” probably coincides in sense.

28. *The spider*]—It is, perhaps, impossible to ascertain with certainty the true meaning of the $\alpha\pi\alpha\chi\lambda\epsilon\gamma. \tau\iota\mu\mu\omega$. It

has been taken to mean *hirundo*, *simia*, *lacerta*, *salamandra*, *aranea*. The last, namely, *spider*, seems as probable as any.

“Who made the spider parallels design,
Sure as Demoivre without rule or line?”—Pope.

29. *There are three things, &c.*—After contemplating the wonderful power of instinct, which demonstrates the wisdom of an over-ruling Providence, Agur adverts to the beauty of the productions of nature, which indicates the benignity of the supreme Being, who has supplied us with so many sources of pleasure and delight.

— *which go well*—צער generally denotes a delicate, decorous, and magnificent step or march. See this instanced in a variety of examples by Schroeder, de Vestitu Mulierum, cap. 8, § 4.

31. *The greyhound*—זריר מחנים is another phrase of doubtful import. “Vel de homine, vel de animali quovis velocissimo loquitur. LXX, Chald. Vulg. Syr. Arabic, αλεκτωρ, seu *gallus*, aliis *apis*, aliis *aquila*, aliis *sturnus*, aliis *equus bellator*, aliis *leopardus*, aliis *lælaps*, sive *leporarius canis*, aliis *Zecora* seu *Zebra* Æthiopum.”—Cocceii Lex. ed. Schulz.

— *no rising up*—אלקום seems to be put for אל קום, *i. e.* there is no rising up against him, irresistible. So it is found divided in several MSS. of Kennicott and De Rossi. Thus אל מות is put for immortality ch. xii. 28.—(See more in Noldius, Not. 1810.) Pococke, from the Arabic, thinks it may be rendered, “Rex cum quo populus est, vel, quem sequitur populus suus.”—Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 207.

32. *If thou hast, &c.*—The meaning seems to be, If thou entertainest a presumptuous opinion of thyself, or if thou hast conceived evil in thy heart, “lay thine hand upon thy mouth,” divulge them not, repress them, that they escape not thy lips.

In more general terms, Let not evil thoughts be divulged, should they arise in the mind. To avoid all thoughts and opinions which our better judgment condemns is impossible, but the first step to virtue is, to endeavour instantly to repress them.—Compare ch. xxiv. 9, and note.

“ Evil into the mind of God or man

May come and go, so unapproved, and leave

No spot or blame behind.”—Paradise Lost, v. 117.

— *lay thine hand upon thy mouth*—A phrase denoting profound silence, Job, xxi. 5, xl. 4; Mich. vii. 16. *Digito compesce labellum.* Bury them in such deep silence, repress them so, that they may neither be divulged by thy words, nor thy actions.

33. *For the churning, &c.*—This verse constitutes the reason for the precept immediately preceding. The argument is not fully expressed; a link is wanting in the chain of reasoning, which may be thus supplied: If thou hast too exalted an opinion of thyself, or if thou dost conceive a wicked thought, instantly repress them; for if thou dost not, they will as surely be productive of evil as “ the churning of milk bringeth forth butter,” &c. It is not necessary, in order to illustrate this passage, to inquire into the Asiatic method of churning, but, as a matter of curiosity, the reader may consult Burder’s *Oriental Customs*, and Harmer’s *Observations*, vol. i. p. 438.

— *And the forcing of wrath*—Literally, “ the wringing or pressing of the nostrils,” figuratively for the pressing or squeezing out wrath, if one may be allowed such an expression; that is, exciting or provoking wrath by obstinacy, perverseness, and ill-temper. The sense then is, He who by his perverse conduct wearies another’s patience, and excites his anger, creates thereby strife and contention.—See ch. xiv. 17.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1. *The words of king Lemuel*].—See the Preliminary Dissertation.

2. *What shall I say*].—This verse, being elliptical, may be supplied as in the version. Several examples of a similar ellipsis are given in Waltheri Ellipses I Heb. p. 108, ed. Schulz. Our authorized version is unintelligible.

— *son of my vows*].—My delight, my darling, for whom I have made many vows.

The word בר occurs three times in this verse; and, as it is the Chaldaic form, it has been thought to imply, that this chapter is a later composition than the time of Solomon. “ בר significatione *fili*: senioribus demum temporibus a Syris et Chaldaeis pro Hebraico בן usurpari coeptum, in ejusque locum substitutum esse; in libro Proverbiorum quidem, cap. xxxi. 2, hoc vocabulum occurrere, sed constare inter omnes, duo ultima Proverbiorum capita longo post Salomonem tempore addita esse.”—(Rosenmüller in Ps. ii. 12.) Though I am persuaded the two last chapters are not the composition of Solomon, yet I think this argument is of very little weight. בר denotes *a son* Ps. ii. 12, and ברה, in Cant. vi. 9, may mean *a daughter*; though it probably signifies *the pure one, the choice one*; “electa,” Vulgate, LXX, Syriac; “lectissima,” Dathe; “darling,” Bishop Percy, Mr. Good.

The same conclusion has been drawn from the Chaldaic plural מלכין for מלכים, in the next verse; but this form occurs in much older writings; as, Job, xii. 11, xxiv. 22, xxxi. 10. —(See Buxtorf, Thesaurus, p. 78.) Chaldaisms, in fact, are no sure criterion of the lateness of a book in which they are found; for Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldee, and Arabic, having

all emanated from one common source, the higher we ascend, the greater will be the resemblance.—(Michælis, Not. et Epim. p. 200; Magee on Atonement, No. 59.) Hence the numerous dialectical coincidences discoverable in the book of Job, the most ancient of all the canonical writings.

3. *Give not*—This admonition, it must be acknowledged, might be given very appropriately by Bathsheba to her son, as she had known the fatal effects of lust in his father David, (2 Sam. xii. 10,) and might, possibly, have discovered in the youth of Solomon some tendency to that passion for the fair sex, by which he was afterwards unfortunately betrayed into great errors. The admonition, however, would be equally proper in the mouth of any parent, particularly of one in the more elevated ranks of life, who might naturally suppose that wealth and luxury would form powerful incitements to the irregular gratification of the passions.

— *thy strength*—*i. e.* “*tam corporis, quam animi; nam Venus enervat vires.*”—(Poli Synop.) חַיִּי must also include wealth or riches, as the word often signifies.

— *thy way*—Thy inclination and pursuits, studia, instituta, actiones.

— *that which destroyeth kings*—This hemistich will be differently interpreted, according to the relation which it is considered to bear to the first. If it be taken as antithetic, then it must mean something different to “*women,*” namely, “*war,*” or “*ambition,*” or “*luxury,*” &c. But, as this would be too vague language for any sensible writer to use, it is preferable to take it as parallel to the first hemistich: “*Give not thy strength to women; nor thy way (pursuit, inclination) to that (lust) which destroyeth kings.*” Sensuality is destructive to all, but especially to kings, by corrupting their hearts, leading them to immoderate expense,

and causing them to forget or neglect the cares of government, and the public welfare. A caution of this kind is addressed, with peculiar propriety, to Oriental princes, who seem always to have made it, as they do at this day, a part of Eastern magnificence “to multiply wives,” (Deut. xvii. 17,) to collect great numbers of women in seraglios. It would appear that Saul had a seraglio, (2 Sam. xii. 8,) and David likewise.—(2 Sam. iii. 2, v. 13, xv. 16.) The vast number of Solomon’s wives and concubines (1 Kings, xi. 3) must have been for state and splendour, and were, ultimately, most destructive to him.—(1 Kings, xi. 4, 8.) Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 21) and others mentioned in the Chronicles followed the same example. To what extent the same abominable custom prevails at present in the East is well known. Numbers of unfortunate females are collected together and confined in harems; the expensiveness of these luxurious abodes leads to acts of tyranny and oppression; while a custom of polygamy contributes to the depopulation of the country; and, by rendering the mind feeble, effeminate, sensual, subverts every noble and generous principle of the heart.—(See Selden, *Uxor. Heb. lib. i. cap. 8*; Michaelis, *Commentaries, Art. 54*; Harmer’s *Observations, vol. iii. p. 360*; Parkhurst, *voc. פלגש*.) למחות, infinitive Hiph. for לחמחות, the ח being omitted before the ל; but Michaelis considers the ח as radical, and, taking the word for a noun, renders it, from the Arabic, “et vias tuas igni regum,” h. e. virginibus, reges accendentibus.—Suppl. No. 1394. See *Cocc. Lex. ed. Schulz.*

4. *to desire strong drink*—That is, to excess; for an immoderate attachment to wine and strong drink is both disgraceful and pernicious to kings and princes. נא is a noun from נאה *to desire*, formed like גו *a body*; and may be literally rendered, “Nor for princes is the desire of strong drink.”

7. *That they may drink, &c.*—The meaning of this and the preceding verse is, Instead of indulging in wine and strong drink, princes should rather bestow them upon the poor, the faint, the sick, and the sons of affliction, that, by the exhilaration of moderate cups, the sufferers may forget their poverty and their affliction. Those commentators who refer this to the intoxicating draughts given to malefactors about to suffer by the hands of the executioner, mistake the scope of the passage. The verbs here, as in verse 5, are singular, put distributively, *i. e.* that each of them, &c.

8. *of the oppressed*—Schultens explains the *απαξ λεγ. בני חליו* as a periphrasis for *orphans*, and he supports this interpretation with great learning and ingenuity. It is likewise approved by Doederlein, Dathe, and Schulz: but Michaelis (Suppl. No. 743) renders it, from the Arabic, “*ii quorum causa perplexa est*,” though, as appears to me, without sufficient grounds, even in the Arabic. *בני חליו*, literally, “*fili transitus*,” *i. e.* those who are about to pass away, or perish, through oppression and injustice; in other words, the oppressed. This sense easily springs from *חליו* to *pass*, to *pass away*; and the rendering of Sym. *παντων υμων αποκομενων*, and of the Vulgate, “*qui pertranseunt*,” can scarcely have any other meaning.

10. *Who can find, &c.*—There is not the smallest reason for attributing this beautiful poem, which, beginning here, continues to the end of the chapter, to a different author. It is, undoubtedly, the production of the same writer who composed the first nine verses, and is very appositely introduced; for, having admonished Lemuel against two of the vices most ruinous to the great, wine and lust, the author proceeds to describe the character of a wise and discreet wife, to show, by the contrast, how far preferable is the possession of a virtuous woman to all the pleasures that can be

derived from the deceitful charms of harlots, or the pernicious revelry of wine. From this passage Michaëlis infers, that “Polygamy had very much decreased among the Israelites, and become rather uncommon. Solomon, in Proverbs, xxxi. 10—31, in his description of that wife whom he accounted a blessing to her husband, represents her entirely as a *mater-familias*, that is, the mistress and ruler of the whole household; which a wife in the state of polygamy can never be, being destined solely for her husband’s bed, and having no permission to concern herself at all about domestic economy. It would, therefore, seem, that, although Solomon himself lived in boundless polygamy, his subjects were contented with one wife.”—(Commentaries, Art. 95.) The ingenuity of these remarks must be acknowledged, but their solidity may be doubted. It is observable, that Michaëlis attributes this description to Solomon; though it is plainly ascribed to Lemuel’s mother in the first verse.

The poem is alphabetical, neat without insipidity, and elegantly descriptive without rising to that elevation of thought, and splendour of imagery, which distinguish the bolder flights of poetry. Acrostic or alphabetical poems, that is, those in which each verse or strophe begins with the successive letters of the alphabet, were common among the Hebrews, and other Oriental nations.—See Asseman, *Biblioth. Orient.* vol. iii. part 1, p. 63, 328; Eichhorn, *Præfat. ad Jonesii Poes. Asiat. Comm.*; Rosenmüller, *Argumentum ad Ps. xxv.* For an account of those in the Hebrew volume, see Lowth’s *Prel. Diss. to Isaiah*, and *Prælect.* 3.

— *Who can find*—“Non existentia ejusmodi mulieris negatur, sed *raritas innuitur*.”—Michaëlis, *Not. Uber.* See *Eccles.* vii. 28.

11. *domestic wealth*—ללז, literally, “spoil,” put for that abundance of things necessary to domestic comfort, with

which a prudent wife will enrich the house of her husband. “לל *spolium*, venuste designat *lucra* undique *conquisita*, ac *confecta*; quæ sint tanquam *prædæ opimæ*, quibus domus, cui talis mulier præest, ditatur.”—Schultens.

13. *She seeketh wool and flax*].—“It was usual in ancient times for great personages to do such works as are mentioned in these words, both among the Greeks and Romans. Lucretia with her maids was found spinning, when her husband, Collatinus, paid a visit to her from the camp. Tanaquilis, or Caia Cæcilia, the wife of king Tarquin, was an excellent spinner of wool.—(Val. Max. l. x. p. 348.) Her wool, with a distaff and spindle, long remained in the Temple of Sanguis; and a garment made by her, worn by Servius Tullius, was reserved in the Temple of Fortune. Hence it became a custom for maidens to accompany new-married women with a distaff and spindle, with wool upon them, signifying what they were principally to attend to.—(Pliny, Nat. Hist. l. viii. c. 48.) Maidens are advised to follow the example of Minerva, said to be the first who made a web; and, if they desired to have her favour, learn to use the distaff, and to card and spin.—(Ovid, Fast. l. iii.) So did the daughters of Minyas (Ovid, Met. l. iv. f. 1, v. 34) and the nymphs.—(Virgil, Geor. l. iv.) Augustus Cæsar usually wore no garments but such as were made at home, by his wife, sister, or daughter.—(Sueton. in Vit. August. c. 73.)”—Burder’s Oriental Customs. See also Goguet’s Origin of Laws, par. 1, l. ii. c. 2; Harmer’s Observations, vol. iv. p. 218, and ch. vii. 16, note; Fleury’s Manners of the Israelites, ch. x. ed. Clarke.

14. *She is like ships, &c.*].—This verse describes her domestic economy. As ships take home-manufactures to foreign markets, and bring back, in return, the produce of distant lands; so a virtuous wife exchanges the things which

her hands have wrought for the produce of foreign countries, and for such articles as are necessary for domestic purposes, seeking the best market, and studious of proper economy.

15. *She riseth, &c.*]—Xenophon, in his *O'economics*, cap. 7, § 35, 36, says, that it is necessary for a prudent and virtuous wife to remain at home, to send forth the servants who have to work in the fields, and to superintend those who are occupied in domestic labours. She is to distribute to them what they are allowed to consume, to exercise great foresight and economy, &c. Throughout the description which Ischomachus, according to Xenophon, gives of a virtuous wife, a great resemblance may be traced to the character delineated in this part of the Proverbs.—See Clemens Alex. *Pædag.* lib. iii. c. 11.

— *And giveth meat*]—מֵרֶף *meat* or *food*, Ps. cxi. 5; Mal. iii. 10. Compare ch. xxx. 8. Βρωματα, LXX. So Syriac and Targum.

— *And a portion*]—That is, the portion of work they are to do, their day's labour; ἐργα, LXX. So Syriac and Targum. חֶקֶךְ, being joined with מֵרֶף *meat*, must here mean *a portion of work, an appointed task, pensum*, as in Exod. v. 14; but it sometimes denotes *a portion of food*, ch. xxx. 8; Gen. xlvii. 22; Ezek. xvi. 27.—(See Simonis, *Lex. Heb.* קֶחֶךְ.) “Nota hic eam toti familiæ cibum parare, sed ancillis modo, non maribus, opera præscribere.”—Cartwright.

16. *She considereth a field, &c.*]—In this description of a virtuous wife we must take into consideration the manner of life, and the habits in a remote age, so different from our own. Women of the highest rank were employed in occupations which would appear mean and degrading in these latter ages of delicacy and refinement. They not only laboured at the loom and distaff, but likewise performed many

offices which, according to our European ideas, are more suitable to men. They fetched water from the well, as we find Rebecca did, (Gen. xxiv. 15,) and as is still practised, at the present day, in the East.—(Burder's Oriental Customs, No. 32.) It was their business to grind corn, (Exod. xi. 5; Matt. xxiv. 41,) and, in some cases, to tend the flocks and herds. Thus, Rachel kept her father's sheep; (Gen. xxix. 9;) and the seven daughters of Jethro, a prince and priest of Midian, kept their father's flocks, and used to draw water for them.—(Exod. ii. 16.) Every thing, indeed, relating to agriculture and pasturage was accounted of great importance, and highly honourable among the Israelites. Hence the virtuous wife is here represented as attending to her husband's interests in these respects. "She considereth a field," she maturely weighs its value, "and buyeth it," if it be an advantageous purchase; "with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard," with the price of her manufactures (verse 24) she causeth a vineyard to be planted. This is similar to what is still practised in Abyssinia. "Most of the laborious occupations, both abroad and at home, devolve upon the women; such as grinding the corn, bringing in wood and water, cultivating the ground, and picking herbs for the consumption of the day."—(Salt's Narrative in Lord Valentia's Travels, vol. ii. ch. 11, 8vo. edit.) A passage quoted by Schultens from Columella forms a good comment upon this place; "Apud Græcos, et mox apud Romanos, usque in Patrum nostrorum memoriam, fere domesticus labor *matronalis* fuit, &c. Erat enim summa reverentia, cum concordia et diligentia mista, flagrabatque mulier pulcherrima æmulatione, studens *negotia* viri cura sua *majora* et *meliora* reddere," &c.—Præf. l. 12, de Re Rustica.

17. *She girdeth her loins with strength*—The loins are sometimes put, metaphorically, for strength, Ps. lxxix. 24;

Isa. xlv. 1 : (see Glassii Phil. Sac. p. 1157 :) hence "to gird the loins" is a phrase denoting to prepare and nerve the body for any strenuous labour or exercise.—(1 Kings, xviii. 46; 2 Kings, iv. 29; Job, xxxviii. 3; Jer. i. 17. Compare Ps. xviii. 39.) The expression is drawn from the loose, flowing garments of the ancients, which required to be girded close, before beginning any active or laborious office. The sense then is, She uses every means to acquire strength and activity of body, which she assiduously exercises in her various works.

18. *She perceiveth, &c.*—She perceives that the traffic in the produce of her labours is advantageous.

— *Her lamp, &c.*—This is well illustrated by Parkhurst, by a passage which he quotes from Monsieur de Guys' Sentimental Journey through Greece: "Embroidery is the constant employment of the Greek women. Those who follow it for a living are employed in it from morning to night, as are also their daughters and slaves. This is a picture of the industrious wife, painted after nature, by Virgil. I have a living portrait of the same kind constantly before my eyes. The *lamp* of a pretty neighbour of mine, who follows that trade, is always lighted before day; and her young assistants are all at work betimes in the morning." The lines of Virgil alluded to are in *Æn.* viii. l. 407.

—"Prima quies medio jam noctis abactæ
Curriculo expulerat somnum: cum fœmina primum
Cui tolerare colo vitam, tenuique Minerva,
Impositum cinerem et sopitos suscitât ignes,
Noctem addens operi, famulasque ad lumina longo
Exercet penso."—

19. *to the spindle*—The words כִּישוּר and פֶּלֶךְ occur nowhere else in this sense, though they are, no doubt, names of instruments used by the ancient Hebrews in the spinning

of wool; “but what cannot be precisely ascertained,” as Parkhurst observes, “without knowing the structure of the ancient spinning instruments.”

20. *She stretcheth out her hand to the poor, &c.*—Though she is industrious and attentive, she is not of a sordid disposition, but is withal charitable and bountiful to the poor.

21. *double garments*—The garments here mentioned are such as are a defence from the cold: the authorized version, then, “are clothed with scarlet,” is evidently improper, as a scarlet colour is no more protection against cold than any other. It is, therefore, better to render שנים “double garments,” with LXX, Vulgate, E. T. Marg. Tig. J. Trem. Geier, Gatak. Pisc. Tayl. Houb. Le Clerc, Michael. Dur. Hodgs. Dathe, though the word has nowhere else this signification.—See Gataker, Adver. ch. lx.

22. *coverings of tapestry*—See מרבדים explained ch. vii. 16, note.

— *linen*—Our translators have rendered שש by “silk;” but this elegant article of luxury was, probably, unknown to the Jews of the age of Solomon. The silkworm was unknown beyond the territories of China, of which it is a native, till the reign of Justinian; (Gibbon’s Roman Empire, ch. 40;) and, though silk had been introduced into Persia some centuries before, the opinion of the Rabbins, that the silk manufactures were known in the age of Moses, and even of Abraham, is not grounded upon any evidence of Scripture. Some think it means a material, like silk, of a bright yellow, which we see sometimes adhering, like a tuft, to a large kind of shellfish called *pinna marina*.—(Acad. des Scienc. ann. 1712, M. p. 204.) Others suppose that it signifies a kind of fine flax, which grew in Egypt or Judæa.—(Bochart, Phaleg. lib. iii. cap. 4.) Others again take it to mean cotton.—

(Goguet, *Origin of Laws*, par. 1, l. ii. c. 2.) Parkhurst understands it of fine white linen, or cotton-cloth. The reader will find more on this subject in Celsii Hierobot. par. 2, p. 259; Braunius, de Vest. Sacerd. lib. i. cap. 8, p. 94; Schroeder, de Vest. Mulierum, p. 243, 333. Foster's work, de Bysso Antiquorum, I have never seen.

23. *Her husband is respected*].—When he sits in the place of judgment and of public resort, he is marked out and respected as the husband of so prudent and excellent a woman. Not, surely, as some commentators explain it, distinguished by the elegance and splendour of his dress, the work of her hands.

24. *She maketh vestments and selleth them, &c.*].—"Herodotus informs us that the Egyptian women used to carry on commerce. That trade is now, however, lost; and the Arabs of that country are the only people who retain any share of it. Maillet (Let. xi. p. 134) says that the women used to deal in buying and selling things woven of silk, gold, and silver, of pure silk, of cotton, of cotton and thread, or simple linen cloth, whether made in the country or imported. This is precisely what the industrious Israelitish women are supposed to have done."—Burder, who has abridged this from Harmer's *Observations*, vol. iv. p. 343.

— *vestments*].—The origin and meaning of כִּטְוֹן is learnedly discussed by Schroeder, de Vest. Mulier. Heb. cap. 19. He derives it from the Arabic كِطْوَان *kizavit vestem*, and says it denotes an inner garment, worn next to the skin, which the Romans call *Interulas*, or *Subuculas*, or *Indusia*. That this explanation suits all the passages where the word occurs, and that such a vestment or shirt was in use among the ancients, he proves with great erudition. It may be observed, that shirts of linen, cotton, or gauze, are worn by the Turks

and Moors, by the roving Arabs of condition, and in Arabia Felix.—(Harmer's Observations, vol. iv. p. 344.) The dress of the modern Greeks, according to Mr. Hobhouse, is "a cotton shirt, made like a woman's chemise, cotton drawers, a vest and jacket of silk and stuff, a pair of large loose brogues, drawn up a little above the ankle, and a short sock; the part of the garment next added is a long broad shawl, often highly worked, and very expensive, wrapped in wide folds round the loins. In one corner of this girdle the poorer people, especially in travelling, both Turks and Greeks, conceal their money, and then wind the shawl round them."—Journey through Albania, &c. Let. 31, 4to. Lond. 1813.

— *girdles*].—Girdles were sometimes of so fine and rich a texture, as to be considered a valuable present. Thus we find Joab would have rewarded a soldier of his army, who saw Absalom hanging in a tree: "Why didst thou not smite him there to the ground, and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a girdle?"—(2 Sam. xviii. 11. Compare 1 Sam. xviii. 4.) People of rank in the East wear girdles at present, which are very rich, sometimes all of silk and superbly adorned with gold and silver.—See Harmer's Observations, vol. ii. p. 527, ed. Clarke; Parkhurst, חגור; and particularly Schroeder, de Vest. Mulier. cap. ix. § 6, p. 139; Jahn, Archæol. Bibl. § 121.

25. *And she shall rejoice, &c.*].—The meaning, probably, is, that, having provided all things necessary, and exercised prudent foresight and circumspection in her affairs, she has no apprehensions for the future, but, as she is now happy, so shall she be in time to come. Under the Theocracy, this was usually the case; and it is generally so now; for the amiable qualities of virtue and prudence are the likeliest means to secure a wife's present comfort, and her happiness for the future. "To laugh" is used for "rejoicing," "being happy,"

Job, viii. 21; Gen. xxi. 6; Luke, vi. 21, 25; &c. “Non timet sibi, sed segura est potius in tempus futurum, et parum angitur cogitatione illius.”—(Michælis, Not. Uber. So Le Clerc, Poli Synop.) The explication of Schultens is to this effect; that, although she possesses the most ample wealth, &c. yet she is not elated with an empty vanity, but clothes herself with modesty and virtue, which she regards as her real and unperishable ornaments.

26. *She openeth her mouth, &c.*—The first hemistich describes the prudence and wisdom of her speech, the second, the kindness and benevolence of it.

— *And upon her tongue is the law of kindness*—“*i. e.* engraved, alluding, perhaps, to the Decalogue, Exod. xxxi. 18.”—(Dimock.) But by “law” we are probably to understand doctrine, instruction, precept; (see ch. i. 8;) namely, on her tongue is benevolent doctrine and kind instruction.

27. *She superintendeth, &c.*—This verse delineates her constant attention to the conduct and behaviour of the inmates of her house. Her watchfulness is unremitted; she not only gives meat to her household, and their portion of daily work to her maidens, but likewise takes care that they do their duty, and conduct themselves with moral propriety. According to the pattern here exhibited, let every virtuous wife have a watchful eye to the morals of her children and domestics. The lessons of a mother have a powerful effect in repressing the rising passions, and in cultivating the opening virtues of the heart. Nor is the influence of a virtuous mistress of a family less salutary upon the minds of her servants; she may check improper discourse and immoral habits; she may, by casual observations and incidental remarks, inculcate the virtues belonging to their situation; and she may promote honesty and frugality, industry and sobriety, order and

regularity among them, which will not only render them useful members of society, but will contribute much to their eternal interests. She who does not anxiously watch over the principles and moral conduct of her domestics, whatever other graces she may possess, is not entitled to the character of a virtuous wife.

— *superintendeth*]**—**צפה is a very emphatical word: it is applied to the eyes of Jehovah Proverbs, xv. 3; Ps. lxvi. 7. It denotes, that the good wife carefully attends to every thing that is going on in her house, and regulates all with prudence and kindness; it is, therefore, well expressed by the word “superintend.”

28. *Her children rise up*]**—**“To rise” (קום) often in Scripture denotes “to begin,” “to undertake,” “aggre^di agendum aliquid.”—(2 Sam. xiii. 31; Josh. xviii. 4; Neh. ii. 20, iii. 1; Job, i. 20, where see Schultens; Jon. iii. 6, &c.) So the Greek word ἀνίστημι is used, (Schleusneri Lex. 5,) and the Arabic قام.—Golii Lex. Arab.

— *Her husband also*]**—**Here is an ellipsis of ארisseth, after בעלה *her husband*.

29. *Many women, &c.*]**—**This may be understood as spoken by the husband: thus, “Her husband also, and he praiseth her,” saying, “Many women have acted virtuously, but thou excellest them all.” Or it may be taken as an exclamation of the author of the chapter, who, as if charmed with the picture of the virtuous wife which he had drawn, bursts into expressions of admiration, and apostrophizes her in these words: “Many women have acted virtuously, but thou excellest them all!” And this appears preferable, as the two following verses are the observations of the author of the chapter.

— *have acted virtuously*].—Literally, “ *Multæ filiarum virtutem strenuam exercuere.*”—(Schultens, Dathe, &c.) But this idiom cannot well be expressed in English.

31. *Give her, &c.*].—Or, taking the imperative for the future, “ They shall give, or, it shall be given to her according to the fruit of her hands, and her works shall praise her in the gates.” That is, she shall be honoured in proportion to her virtues, and her works shall constitute her highest praise in the place of frequent resort; they shall publicly proclaim her merit. The sense of the authorized version, which I have not thought necessary to alter, is well expressed by Patrick: “ Let every one extol her virtue; let her not want the just commendations of her pious labours in the greatest assemblies, where, if all men should be silent, her own work will declare her excellent worth.”

It is astonishing how this beautiful delineation of a chaste and excellent matron could ever be taken in any other than a literal sense; yet, such is the fervour of an over-heated imagination, that some have not hesitated to interpret it allegorically. They differ, however, as to the subject represented by the allegory; a circumstance which need not excite our surprise, for when the guidance of sound judgment and the rules of sober criticism are once deserted, no limits can be set to the wildness of fancy, and the vagaries of opinion. The Rabbins suppose that the Law or the Synagogue are depicted under the emblem of a virtuous wife, while some of the Christian doctors, instead of the Law or the Synagogue, substitute the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, or the Church.—(See Schultens’s Commentary, and Gill on verse 10.) It were waste of time to confute these fancies; the judicious reader cannot fail to discover, that the author only intended, in this admirable picture, to portray,

according to the ideas of his own age, the character of a wise and virtuous wife. The glowing enthusiast, and the dreaming allegorist, must be left to the enjoyment of their own opinions; argument is used in vain to him who plumes himself on superior light; criticism passes unheeded before him who, despising the letter, mounts on the wings of allegory, or spiritualizes the naked history: but the literal interpretation is never to be deserted without the most urgent necessity; and those who humbly search the Scriptures for divine wisdom, will, with devout and grateful hearts, accept the truths discoverable in them by the steady light of reason and of learning.

The End.

ERRATA.

IN THE PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION.

Page x. note, and throughout the work, for *Michælis*, read *Michaelis*.

— xxiii. note, for *l* read *l*.

— xxxii. line 2, for *will*, read *should*.

— lix. — 5, for *sleight*, read *slight*.

— lxxviii. note, for 1175, read 1775.

— xc. line 2 from the bottom, for *infection*, read *inflection*.

IN THE TRANSLATION.

Chapter v. 16, "Then" should be in Italics.

— viii. 22, dele the comma after *me*.

IN THE NOTES.

Page 86, line 9, for *Eccles. xxxix. 2*, read *Eccles. xxxix. 2*.

— 93, — 3 from the bottom, for *Hebreæ*, read *Hebrææ*.

— 94, — 8, for *Dymock*, read *Dimock*.

— 109, — 15, for *Hale's*, read *Hales's*.

— 111, — 9 from the bottom, for *perquam*, read *per quam*.

— 123, — 10 from the bottom, for *The affix* 1 read *The affix 1*.

— 137, — 7 from the bottom, for *apoloque*, read *apologue*.

— 164, — 12 from the bottom, for *πνευμα* read *πνευμα*.

— 214, — 5 from the bottom, for *Ellipsæ*, read *Ellipses*.

— 211, lines 18, 19, for *alionem*, read *aliorum*.

— 243, — 11, 12, for *the way of its paths*, read *the way of its path*.

— line 3 from the bottom, for *Waltheri*, read *Waltheri*.

— 245, — 14, for *himself*, read *themselves*.

— 248, — 19, for *treasure*, read *treasures*.

— 265, — 12 from the bottom, for *suavi*, read *suaves*.

— 268, — 15, for *The Bible translation favours*, read *The Bible translation has been thought to favour*.

— 275, — 8 from the bottom, for *nuncdenotat*, read *nunc denotat*.

— 306, — 9 from the bottom, for *it*, read *its*.

— 307, — 5, for *determine*, read *determines*.

— 327, — 12 from the bottom, for *Schnurer*, read *Schnurrer*.

— 372, — 1, for *ημων* read *ημων*.

— — 19, for *to lay on*, read *to lay hold on*.

— 376, — 5, for *fascinus*, read *facinus*.